DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CHRYSANDER, *an old merchant.*

DAMIS, *the young scholar, son of* CHRYSANDER.

VALER, *suitor to* JULIANE.

JULIANE, *adopted daughter of* CHRYSANDER.

ANTON, *servant to* DAMIS.

LISETTE, *servant girl.*

The scene is in DAMIS' *study.*

THE YOUNG SCHOLAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—DAMIS (*at a table covered with books*), ANTON.

DA. Then the post has not yet come in?

AN. No.

DA. No? Did you ask for the right one? The post from Berlin——

AN. Of course; the post from Berlin; it has not arrived yet. If it doesn't come in soon, I shall shortly have walked my legs off. You go on just as if it would bring you—who knows what? Now I'll wager that if it does come at all, it will bring some new rubbishing volume, or a newspaper, or else a trashy pamphlet.

DA. No, my good Anton; this time it will be something more than that. Ah! if you knew what——

AN. Do I want to know it then? Much good would it do me, except to give me one more laugh at you, and is that anything unusual?—Have you anywhere else to send me? If not, I have a little business at the town cellar; may be your errand lies the same way! Eh?

DA. (*angry*). No, you scamp.

AN. See there; he has read everything but the 'Book of Manners.' But think a moment. No errand to the bookseller's?

DA. No, you scamp.

AN. I hear that "scamp" so often, that I shall end by believing myself that it is my own Christian name. To the bookbinder's, perhaps?

Da. Hold your tongue or——

An. Or to the printer's? I know my way to these three, Heaven be praised, like the dyer's horse round the cylinder.

Da. Don't you observe, knave, that I am reading?—Do you mean to disturb me any longer?

An. (*aside*). Hullo! He is really getting angry. Steady, Anton. . . . . But do just tell me what sort of book that is you are reading. My stars! What stuff it is. You understand it? Can any man read such scratchings, such fearful zigzags? If that isn't Faust's hell-charm, at the very least . . . . . oh dear! Everybody knows how it goes with people who will learn everything. . . . . The evil spirit leads them astray at last, and they learn witchcraft too.

Da. (*looks good-humoured again*). Why good Anton! This is a book written in the Hebrew tongue, by Ben Maimon Jadchasacka.

An. I daresay! who is going to believe that? I know what Hebrew is, at any rate. Isn't it the same thing as the original language, the scriptural speech, the holy word? Our parson uttered that more than once from the pulpit, when I was still at school. But, goodness, he had no books like that. I have peeped into all his books; I once had to help him to shift his quarters from one house to another.

Da. Ha, ha, ha! That's quite likely. It is wonderful enough if a country parson knows as much as the name. In fact, between you and me, my dear Anton, clergymen in general are poor heroes in the field of learning.

An. Come, come, that cannot apply to all of them. At any rate the M.A. in my native village is among the exceptions. Surely! The schoolmaster himself has told me more than once that the parson is a very learned man; and I must believe what the schoolmaster says; for as the parson has often told me, he is no bad schoolmaster; he knows a word or two of Latin, and can give his opinion on it.

Da. That's capital. So the schoolmaster praises the parson, and the parson, not wishing to be ungrateful, praises the schoolmaster. If my father were here, he

would of course say, *manus manum lavat.* Have not you noticed his silly habit of lugging in a scrap of Latin at every opportunity? The old idiot thinks that as he has so learned a son, he too must show that he once went through the schools.

An. Well, I always thought it must be something silly; for he often mutters something in the midst of his talk, of which I can't understand a word.

Da. Don't conclude from that, though, that everything you don't understand is silly; else what a lot of silly trash I should know. But, oh, sweet learning, how much does a mortal who possesses you owe to you! And how lamentable is it, that only the fewest know you in your completeness! The theologian believes he possesses you through a medley of scriptural sentences, frightful narratives, and misapplied figures of speech. Those learned in the law imagine you are theirs, by reason of their unhappy skill in perverting the useless laws of countries that have ceased to exist, to the prejudice of justice and reason, and in expressing the most frightful decisions in a still more frightful language. The physician believes that he has really mastered you when by means of a legion of barbârous words he can make those who are in health ill, and those who are in sickness worse. But, oh deluded fools, truth will no longer leave you in these errors which reflect disgrace on her. Occasions arise when you yourselves recognise how defective your knowledge is; and then, full of mad arrogance, you measure all human knowledge by your own, and even cry aloud, in a tone which seems one of pity for all mortals, "Our knowledge is fragmentary." No, believe me, my dear Anton, man is certainly capable of a knowledge of all things. To deny this is to make a confession of one's own laziness or of one's mental mediocrity. If I reflect how much I know for my few years, I am still more convinced of this truth. Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Italian, English . . . . . that makes six languages, of all of which I am a master; and I am only twenty years old.

An. Soft! You have forgotten one—German.

Da. True, my dear Anton. Then that makes seven languages, and I am only twenty years old.

An. Hem! You are making fun either of me or of yourself. What? You are not going to reckon your knowledge of German as learning? I didn't mean what I said seriously.

Da. And so you think that you yourself know German.

An. I not know German? It would be the deuce's own joke, if I spoke the language of the Calmucks without knowing it.

Da. There is knowledge and knowledge. You know German; that is, you know how to express your thoughts by sounds which a German can understand, that is, which arouse in him the thoughts which you have in your mind. But you do not know German; that is, you do not know which words of this language are vulgar or low, which are coarse and which graceful, which express nothing and which something, which are obsolete and which in actual use; you don't know its rules; you have no scholarly knowledge of it.

An. What is there that a learned man can't teach us! If it only depended on your "that is," I do believe that you would go so far as to dispute my being able to eat.

Da. Eat? Now in very truth, if I choose to be accurate, you can't do that either.

An. I can't eat, can't I? Nor drink, I suppose?

Da. You can eat; that is, you can cut up your food, put it in your mouth, chew it, swallow it, and so forth. You cannot eat; that is, you do not know the mechanical laws in accordance with which the process of eating goes on; you do not know what is the function of each muscle in this operation. You know not whether the digastricus or the masseter, whether the internal or the external pterygoideus, whether the zygomaticus or the platysma-myodes, whether. . . . .

An. Oh dear! Whether, whether! The only "whether" I pay attention to, is whether my stomach gets any food, and whether it agrees with me. But to return to the languages; would you think, now, that I understand one which you don't?

Da. You understand a language which I don't?

An. Yes, think a bit.

Da. Perhaps you know Coptic?

An. Coptic? No, that I don't.

Da. Chinese? Malabar? Though I do not know how you should.

An. How you beat about the bush. Did not you see my cousin? He visited me a fortnight ago. He spoke nothing but this language.

Da. The Rabbi who came to me a short while ago was surely not your cousin?

An. I am not exactly a Jew, am I? My cousin is a Wend; I know Wendish, and you don't.

Da. (*reflectively*). He is right. That my servant should understand a language, which I cannot understand! And that language too one which is not a mere dialect. As I remember, it must be closely allied to Hebrew. Who knows how many roots which are lost in the one I may discover in the other! The thing begins to run in my mind.

An. There, now! But do you know what? Double my wages and you shall soon understand as much of it as I do myself. We will be industrious and talk Wendish together, and . . . . . in short, think it over. I am forgetting my errand to the town-cellar altogether, over this confounded palaver. I will be back and at your service again soon.

Da. Stay here now; stay here.

An. But here's your father coming. Don't you hear? We could not talk longer, anyhow. (*Exit.*)

Da. I wish my father would leave me undisturbed. Does he think I am such an idler as himself?

Scene II.—Damis, Chrysander.

Chrys. Always over those confounded books! My son, one may have too much of a good thing. Amusement is as necessary as work.

Da. My father, study is amusement enough for me. He who seeks for other pleasures than knowledge, cannot have tasted its true sweetness.

Chrys. Don't say that! I also studied in my youth. I penetrated to the very marrow of learning. But as for being always engaged over my books—by no means. I

went out, I played, I went into society, I made friends with the girls. What the father did in his youth, the son can also do, and ought to do. *A bove majori discat arare minor*, as we Latin scholars say. Especially let me recommend the girls to you, *de meliori*, as we Latin scholars say. Those fellows are fools who warn a young man off from the girls as if they were worse than scorpions; who bid him to avoid them, as we Latin scholars say, *cautius sanguine viperino*——

Da. *Cautius sanguine viperino?* Ay, that's Latin; but how runs the whole passage?

> Cautius timet flavum Tiberim tangere? cur olivum
> Sanguine viperino
> Cautius vitat? . . . . .

Oh, I understand quite well, father. You have not gone to the fountain-head! If you had you would have known that, in this very Ode, Horace describes love as a very injurious passion, and woman as——

Chrys. Horace? Horace? Horace was an Italian, and meant Italian women. Yes! I too warn you against those girls of Italy. They are dangerous. I have a good friend who in his youth. . . . . But no, one must not scandalize people. . . . . German girls, on the other hand, German girls! It is quite another thing to have to do with them. I should not be the man I am if the society of women had not given me a thorough polish. I should think one could see that in me. You have read enough in dead books, dip for once into a living one.

Da. I am astonished.

Chrys. Ah, you will be yet more astonished when you see a little deeper. Woman, you must know, is a new world for a young man, where he finds so much to stare and wonder at——

Da. Yet listen to me! I am astonished, I repeat, to hear you talk in a way which by no means expresses the same precepts which you gave me when I went to the high school.

Chrys. *Quæ, qualis, quanta!* Now, and then! *Tempora mutantur*, as we Latin scholars say.

Da. *Tempora mutantur!* Do pray lay aside such vulgar

prejudices. The times do not alter: for let us just consider; what is time?——

Chrys. Hold your tongue! Time is a thing that I am not going to let you waste with your useless chatter. The precepts I gave you at that time were suited to the measure of experience and intelligence you had then. But now I trust you have so much of both that you will not make a business of your pleasure. On these grounds, then, I advise you——

Da. Your words have a certain semblance of truth; but I go deeper. You shall see directly, the *status controversiæ*——

Chrys. Oh, the State of Controversia may lie in Barbara or in Celarent for aught I care. I didn't come here to dispute with you, but——

Da. But to learn the terms used in the art of disputation! Good. Then you must know that neither Barbara nor Celarent have——

Chrys. I shall go mad! Be off with your pack of nonsense, Mr. Pedant, or——

Da. Nonsense! These odd terms are, it is true, relics of the scholastic philosophy; but nevertheless such relics——

Chrys. Over which I shall lose all patience, if you don't listen to me at once. I come to you to discuss the most serious matter in the world. . . . . for what is more serious than marriage? . . . . and you——

Da. Marriage? Speak of marriage to me? To me?

Chrys. Ha, ha! Does that make you attentive? Well, then, *ausculta et perpende!*

Da. *Ausculta et perpende? Ausculta et perpende?* A happy idea——

Chrys. Oh, I have ideas——

Da. Which I have here got hold of.

Chrys. You?

Da. Yes; I. Do you know where this *ausculta et perpende* comes from? I have just lighted on the discovery that it is from Homer. Ah! What is there I can't find in my Homer?

Chrys. You and your Homer are a pair of fools.

Da. I and Homer? Homer and I? We two? Ha,

ha, ha. By all means, father. Thank you, thank you. I and Homer; Homer and I. . . . . But listen: Whenever Homer. . . . . he was in truth no fool—as little of that as I myself. . . . . whenever, I say, he makes his heroes rouse their men to valour, or begin a discussion in a council of war, the commencement of their speech is, "Listen to what I utter and think thereon!" For instance, in the Odyssey

Κέκλυτε δὴ νῦν μέν, Ἰθακήσιοι, ὅ τί κεν εἴπω

And then there often follows

Ὣς ἔφαθ.' οἱ δ' ἄρα τοῦ μάλα μὲν κλύον, ἠδ' ἐπίθοντο.

That is: Thus spake he, and they obeyed the words which they had heard.

Chrys. Oh! they obeyed him, did they? Well, there is some sense in that. Perhaps Homer is no fool after all. Look to it that I may be able to make a recantation concerning you too. So now again to business: I am aware, my son——

Da. Patience for one instant, father. I am just going to sit down and make a note of this remark.

Chrys. Make a note? What is there to make a note of in this? To whom does it matter whether this scrap is out of Homer or out of a hymn-book.

Da. It matters to the learned world; my honour and Homer's is concerned in it! For fifty such remarks are the making of a philologist. And this one is new, I must tell you, quite new.

Chrys. Well then, write it down another time.

Da. But suppose I forget it? I should be inconsolable. Please have the goodness at least to remind me of it again.

Chrys. Well, well, I will do so; only do now listen to me. I am, my son, acquainted with a most amiable girl; and I am aware that you too know her. Should you feel desirous——

Da. I acquainted with a girl, an amiable girl? Oh, father! If any one heard that, what would they think of my scholarship? . . . I know an amiable girl?

Chrys. Now, upon my word, I don't think any inn-

keeper would be as alarmed when charged with knowing such and such a scamp, as you are because you are said to be acquainted with a girl. Is that, then, a reproach?

Da. At any rate, it is no honour, and least of all for a scholar. Every one acquires by degrees the habits of those with whom he associates. Every woman is frivolous, proud, loquacious, quarrelsome and childish all her life long, let her grow as old as she may. Hardly a single woman knows that she has a soul about which she ought to be infinitely more concerned than about her body. To dress, undress, and dress themselves anew, to sit before a mirror, admire their own charms, and devise affected airs; to remain idle at the window with inquisitive eyes, read senseless novels, and, at best, take a needle in hand to pass away the time. That is their employment; that is their life. And do you think that a student could know anything more of such a silly race of creatures than their outward form, without injury to his reputation?

Chrys. Good Heavens, man! Your mother will turn in her grave. Just remember she was once a girl. Reflect that things cannot be otherwise than nature has made them! Besides, as we Latin scholars often say, *nulla regula sine exceptione*. And the girl of whom I am thinking, and whom you know, is certainly an exception.

Da. No, no, I will swear it. Our cousins excepted, and Juliane. . . . .

Chrys. And Juliane? *Bene!*——

Da. And her maid excepted, I don't know a single bit of womankind. Yes, may Heaven punish me if I ever allow the ideas of becoming acquainted with any more to enter my head!

Chrys. Well, well! As you please. Enough, you know Juliane.

Da. More's the pity.

Chrys. And it is just Juliane concerning whom I want to know your thoughts.

Da. Juliane? What I think of Juliane? O father, if you inquired what I thought about Erinna, Corinna, Telesilla, or Praxilla——

Chrys. Good gracious! A moment ago he swore he

didn't know a single girl, and now mentions half-a-dozen wenches *——

Da. What, father?

Chrys. Yes, my son! You do not recognise that termination I suppose? *Netrix*, *Lotrix*, *Meretrix*. . . . .

Da. Good Heavens! To allude to famous Greek poetesses by such a term.

Chrys. Aye, aye. Poetesses, quite so quite so. *Lotrix*, *Meretrix*, *Poetrix*——

Da. *Poetrix?* Oh, my poor ears! You must say, *poetria*, or *poetris*.

Chrys. *Is* or *Ix*, as you please, Mr. Lexicon.

Scene III.—Chrysander, Damis, Lisette.

Lis. Quick, Mr. Chrysander, down to the parlour. Some one wants to speak to you.

Chrys. Now who can the fool be who must needs come to disturb me at this very moment. Who is it?

Lis. How should I know every fool?

Chrys. What's that? You have an unlucky tongue, Lisette, to call an honest gentleman a fool. For he surely is an honest gentleman. How else should he want me?

Lis. Come, come, you will surely pardon my tongue the fault that yours committed.

Chrys. Which mine committed?

Lis. Oh, do go. The honest gentleman is waiting.

Chrys. Let him wait. I didn't tell the fool to come. I shall return directly, my son. (*Exit.*)

Lis. (*aside*). I must see whether I can make anything out of my young mistress's odd fancy.

Scene IV.—Lisette, Damis.

Da. Now, then! Is not Lisette going as well?

Lis. Your most obedient servant. If you give orders I shall obey them. But at least tell me first how, in Heaven's name, you can exist in such continual solitude?

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* There are two plural forms of the word Mensch, namely, Menschen and Menscher. The latter, which is the word in this passage, is used only of a woman of doubtful reputation.—Ed.

What do you do all day in your study? Don't your moments turn to hours?

Da. Oh! Of what use are such questions? Off with you! Off!

Lis. Surely you can't be at your books the whole time. Books! such dead companions! No; I am for the living, and Mamselle Juliane's taste is the same. Of course we read now and then; about a knight errant, or a Banise,* or something good of that sort. But we never stand it for more than an hour at a time. To continue at it for whole days, as you do—Heaven help us! We should be dead by the third day. And then, what's worst of all, not to speak a word the whole time; that would be a purgatory to us. It cannot be a superiority belonging to the whole of your sex, for I know men-folk who are just as fickle as we are, or even more so. It can only be a few mighty souls who possess these peculiar gifts.

Da. Lisette does not speak altogether foolishly. It is a pity that so good a mother-wit should not be improved by learning.

Lis. You make me blush. I could almost pay you for that, and recount to you the succession of panegyrics which were made on you by the people at the garden-party yesterday. But I won't offend your modesty. I know scholars set only too much store by this virtue.

Da. Panegyrics on me?

Lis. Yes, yes, on you.

Da. Pray do not trouble yourself about me, my dear Lisette I will treat the praise as belonging to another, and thus my modesty will be at peace. Come, tell me about it. I only want to hear it on account of your lively and artless way of expressing yourself.

Lis. Oh my way is surely none of the best. I had no teacher such as you. But I will do your bidding. You know, I suppose, who the gentlemen were who were entertained in the garden yesterday by your father.

Da. No, that I don't. As I had no desire to be present

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* Princess Banise was the heroine of a famous novel written at the end of the eighteenth century, entitled, *Asiatische Banise oder blutiges, jedoch muthiges Pegu.*—Ed.

at the party, I did not trouble myself at all about it. It is to be hoped they were themselves worthy of praise, in order that one may have some ground for being proud of their praise.

Lis. They are tolerably worthy people. But how would it affect you if they were not? You mean, you know, from modesty, to treat the praise of yourself as applying to somebody else. And does the truth depend on the lips which utter it? Listen now——

Da. Heavens! I hear my father returning. For goodness' sake, dear Lisette, don't let him see how long you have stayed with me. Go quickly for a moment into the cabinet there.

Scene V.—Damis, Chrysander.

Chrys. That confounded Valer! He couldn't have come at a more inopportune time. Why the devil should he come back from Berlin just to-day? And why should he at once announce himself to me? Ah! in order. . . . . No, Herr Valer, you are too late for that. Now, my son . . . . . (Damis *stands abstracted as if in deep thought*). Do you hear, my son?

Da. I hear: I hear everything.

Chrys. Briefly, you comprehend, I suppose, what I meant just now. To a wise man three words are enough. *Sapienti sat*, we Latin scholars say. Answer, if you please.

Da. (*still as if in thought*). What am I to answer?

Chrys. What is there to answer? I'll tell you. Answer that you have understood me; that you are pleased with my offer; that you like Juliane; that you will obey me in all things. . . . . Now, will you answer this?

Da. I will see at once. (*In feigned absence of mind he takes up a book.*)

Chrys. What can the book contain on these points? . . . . . Answer from your heart and not from a book . . . . . *Ex libro doctus quilibet esse potest*, as we Latin scholars say.

Da. (*as if reading in the book*). Perfectly right. But what further?

Chrys. The rest follows like Greek. You say "yes,"

she says "yes." Then comes betrothal, and soon after, marriage; and then. . . . . you'll soon see what then.

Da. But suppose this supposition——(*Still as if reading.*)

Chrys. Oh, I never suppose anything which is in the least degree doubtful. Juliane is a ward; I am her guardian; I am your father; what can suit me better than to make you two happy? Her father was my friend, and a good fellow, though a fool. He might have made a fair bankruptcy; his creditors would have been brought to accept an agreement to take a third of their money, and he was simple enough to pay all, down to the last farthing. But what am I thinking of? You knew him, didn't you?

Da. Not personally. But the circumstances of his life are perfectly familiar to me. I have read it in some biography or other.

Chrys. Read it? Read it in print?

Da. Yes, yes. Read it. He was born about the middle of last century, and died about twenty years ago, as Superintendent-general* in Pomerania. Oriental languages were his strong point. But all his books are not equally good. This is one of the best. The man is said to have had a singular habit of——

Chrys. Who are you talking of?

Da. Didn't you ask me whether I had known the author of this book.

Chrys. I think you are dreaming; or else there is something gone wrong with your brains. I asked you whether you had known Juliane's father.

Da. Pardon me, if I answered a little absently. I was thinking why the Rabbis call the Schurek M'lo "Pum."

Chrys. Oh, damn your Schurek! Now, just attend to what your father is saying to you . . . . (*takes the book out of his hand*). You did not know him, then? Now I come to think of it, it is hardly possible you should have known him. Juliane was still very young when he died. Immediately on his death I took her into my house, and—thank Heaven!—she has received much kindness here. She is fair and virtuous. To whom should I give

* A high office in the Lutheran Church.

her in preference to you? What do you think? Answer. You stand there as if you were asleep.

Da. Yes, father. There is only one point to consider ——

Chrys. You are right; there certainly is one to consider; namely, whether you feel yourself competent to accept a public post, because, though——

Da. What? competent? . . . . You doubt my ability then? How unlucky that I can't at once give you most unquestionable proof of it. However, it must come this evening; believe me, this very evening. That confounded post! I can't imagine where it is loitering.

Chrys. Calm yourself, my son. The question is not put through any mistrust of you, but merely because I believe that it does not do for a man to marry before he has an appointment; just as there is no need, to my mind, for a man to take a post until he knows where to provide himself with a wife.

Da. Oh! confound marriage! Confound the wife! Will you excuse my leaving you alone? I must send that fellow to the post at once. Anton! Anton! It is quite impossible to do anything with the rascal; I must just go myself.

Scene VI.—Anton, Chrysander.

An. Did not Herr Damis call me? Where is he? What am I to do?

Chrys. I don't know what he has in his head. He calls you—means to send you to the post—bethinks himself that it is impossible to do anything with a rascal like you, and goes himself. Now tell me, do you want to remain an ass all your life?

An. Gently, Herr Chrysander! I have no part in your son's folly. I have been obliged to go to the post for him more than a dozen times to-day. He expects letters from Berlin. Is it my fault that they don't come?

Chrys. By all that's wonderful! But you have been with him some time now; you ought to know his character and way of thinking a little, eh?

An. Ha, ha! That depends on what we scholars call knowledge of character! In that art I am a master, upon

my honour! I only have to speak a word with a man, I only have to look at him, and, presto! I know the whole man! I know at once whether he is reasonable or capricious, liberal or niggardly——

Chrys. I do believe you are pointing to me!

An. Oh, never mind about my hands! . . . . Whether he's——

Chrys. You shall show your skill at once. I have proposed a marriage to my son; now, just say, if you know him, what he will do.

An. Your son? Herr Damis? Excuse me, with him my art, otherwise so successful, goes begging.

Chrys. Go you with it, you rascal, and don't boast.

An. It is quite impossible to know the humour of a young scholar, or to draw any inference from it. And that which is impossible, Herr Chrysander . . . . is impossible.

Chrys. And how so?

An. Because he has none.

Chrys. None?

An. No, not none, but a fresh one every moment. The books and examples he meets with are the winds by which the weathercock of his thoughts is ruled. To keep to the question of marriage, since that is at present before us, I fancy that. . . . . In the first place you must know that Herr Damis has never concealed anything from me. I have always been his confidant, and have always been the man whom he preferred to have to do with. We have held discussions together at the university, for whole days, whole nights. And I fancy he must find something in me, some quality, which he finds in no one else——

Chrys. I'll tell you what quality it is—your stupidity! It pleases him when he sees that he knows more than you. If you are a rascal, and do not contradict him, and praise him to his face, and admire him——

An. Come, confound it! There you are betraying the whole of my policy! How cunning an old merchant is.

Chrys. But we mustn't forget our principal object. About marriage——

An. Why, on that matter he has the deuce's own

whims in his head. For instance; I remember a time when he wouldn't have married at all.

Chrys. Not at all? Then I must marry again. You don't think I will let my name die out? The scoundrel. But why?

An. For this reason; because there have been learned men who held celibacy was most fitting for a scholar. God knows whether these gentlemen were too spiritual or too fleshly in their disposition! In his capacity of old bachelor that is to be, he had already provided himself with various ingenious excuses.

Chrys. Excuses! Can such a profligate, who holds this sacred sacrament—for I must say in passing, I am by no means pleased with our theologians who will not allow marriage to be a sacrament—he, I say, who despises this holy sacrament, can he venture to excuse his godlessness? But I believe you are fooling me, fellow; for only a moment ago he seemed to approve of my proposal.

An. The devil must have had a finger in it then. How did he behave? Tell me, did he stand there as if he had been stunned? Did he look fixedly on the ground? Did he put his hand to his head? Did he reach towards a book, as if he would read it? Did he let you go on talking without interruption?

Chrys. You have hit it! You depict him as if you had seen him.

An. Oh, then there is little hope! When he goes on in that way he means you to consider him abstracted. I know his ways. He hears all you say to him, but you are to believe that through the intensity of his reflection he has not heard it. He sometimes answers too, but when you place his reply before him again he will never admit that it was given in answer to that which you wanted to know from him.

Chrys. Now, whoever after that won't admit that too much learning confuses the brain deserves to be learned himself. Heaven be praised that I knew how to hit the happy mean in my youth! *Omne nimium vertitur in vitulum*, as we Latin scholars jocosely say. But may God be gracious to the scamp if he remains obstinate in his resolution! If he affirms that it is not necessary to marry

and beget children, doesn't he give me to understand that I need not have begotten him? The thankless son!

An. True; there can be no greater ingratitude under the sun than when a son will not show recognition of the pains his father must have taken to bring him into the world.

Chrys. No. Certainly the holy estate of matrimony shall find its defender in me.

An. Your intention is good; but many such defenders as you would reduce the custom returns on eatables considerably.

Chrys. How so?

An. Think. Three wives and scarcely a son by the third.

Chrys. Scarcely! What do you mean with your "scarcely," you scoundrel.

An. Whew; you understand something worse than I meant by that.

Chrys. But between ourselves, Anton; if the women of twenty years back had been like the women of the present time, I should give way to strange thoughts. He is far too little like me! Yet the women of twenty years ago were not so daring as now, not so faithless as in these days, nor yet so——

An. Are you sure of that? In truth, then, they did great wrong to my mother, from whom her husband, who declined to be my father, was separated three and thirty years ago. But that's a matter I don't like to think of. The whims of your son are more amusing.

Chrys. Say, more vexatious. But tell me what were his excuses?

An. His excuses were fancies which did not grow in his own brain. He said, for instance, that as long as he was under forty, when any one asked why he didn't marry he should answer that he was too young; but when he was over forty he would reply he was too old. I don't know the name of the sage who is supposed to have said the same thing. Another pretext was this: he wouldn't marry because he was thinking every day of turning monk, and didn't turn monk because every day he was thinking of marrying.

Chrys. What! He'll turn monk, too, will he? There

one may see what a bad character, with no reverence for the holy state of matrimony, may come to. I never thought to find this in my own son.

An. Don't be alarmed. In your son everything is merely transitory. He had read the notion in the biography of a sage; he took a fancy to it, and at once resolved to produce it as his own when occasion offered. But the whim was soon expelled by another, just as—just as . . . . . What a pity I can't hit on anything like it! In short, out it went. Now he would marry, and marry a perfect devil of a wife.

Chrys. If only more fools would adopt this fancy, that good fellows might remain free from bad wives.

An. Yes, thought he, it would sound well if it were said of him that the famous Damis is among the number of the learned whom Heaven has plagued with bad wives, but still the learned world cannot complain of him for being in the least prevented, by his domestic crosses, from supplying them with countless learned writings.

Chrys. Writings! Yes, which cost me huge sums. What bills I have had to pay for him at the printer's! The rascal!

An. Patience! He has only just begun to write. Things will be better soon.

Chrys. Better? Perhaps people will count him among those who have written his father out of house and home.

An. Why not? If it brings him honour——

Chrys. Honour be damned.

An. For that a young scholar will do everything. If after his death it should be said that the famous Damis was among the sages who went to the deuce! What's the odds? It is enough that he is called learned and famous.

Chrys. Fellow, you alarm me. But you who are much older than he is, can't you give him good advice now and then?

An. Oh! Herr Chrysander, you know very well that I receive no salary as tutor. And then my stupidity——

Chrys. Which you assume in order to make him still more stupid.

An. (*aside*). Ah, he knows me. (*aloud*) But do you suppose

he was in earnest about the ill-tempered wife? Not in the least. An hour afterwards he was going to choose a learned woman.

Chrys. Well, that would, at any rate, be sensible at last.

An. Sensible? In my humble opinion it was the very stupidest idea he could have adopted. A learned wife! Just think. A wife resembling your son. An honest fellow would be seized by fear and horror at such an idea. Heavens! before I allowed a learned woman to be tied on to me——

Chrys. Fool, fool! They go off like anything amongst better people than you. If there were more of them, who knows whether I might not choose one for myself?

An. Do you know Carlin?

Chrys. Carlin? No.

An. My former comrade; my good friend? You don't know him?

Chrys. No.

An. He wore a light grey coat with red facings, and red and blue shoulder-knots on his Sunday uniform. You must have seen him with me. He had rather a long nose. It was a family mark. For he would fain show from history that his great-great-grandfather, who was present at a certain tournament as a groom, had one just as long. His one defect was that his legs were a little crooked. Do you remember him now?

Chrys. How should I know all the rabble that you know? But what about him?

An. You really don't know him? Ah! then you know one great soul the less. I will enable you to make his acquaintance; I am well esteemed by him.

Chrys. I believe you are sometimes as mad as my son. However do you come on this nonsense?

An. Well, this Carlin, I was going to say—Oh, it is vexatious that you do not know him—this Carlin, I say, once served a gentleman who had a learned wife. The confounded scamp! He was good-looking, and so, as desire is not ruled by regard to rank . . . . . In short, he must have got to know her better. Where otherwise should he have got so much sense? At last her husband

too observed that our friend was learning from the lady; he got his dismissal before he expected it. Poor lady!

Chrys. Silence. I won't listen either to your whims or to my son's any more.

An. Listen to one more—his pet whim; he wanted to marry more than one wife.

Chrys. But one after the other.

An. No, at least half-a-dozen at a time. The Bible, authority, and custom notwithstanding. He was just reading a book then——

Chrys. Ah, those infernal books! I'll hear no more; and there's an end of it. He won't want to take more than one, provided only he takes the one whom I mean for him. And what do you think, Anton?—*quid putas?*—as we say. Will he do it?

An. Perhaps, and perhaps not. If I knew what book he had read last, and could read it myself, and if——

Chrys. I see I shall be obliged to use your help. You are a swindler, it's true, but I am aware that one may do more nowadays with cheats than with honest people.

An. Ay, Herr Chrysander, what do you take me for?

Chrys. No compliments, Herr Anton. I promise you a reward suitable to your service, if you can persuade my son to marry Juliane, *quovis modo*, as we Latin scholars say, by telling truths or lies, by honest practices or crooked ways, *vel sic vel aliter*, as we Latin scholars say.

An. Whom? Juliane?

Chrys. Juliane; *illam ipsam.*

An. Our Juliane? Your ward, your foster-daughter?

Chrys. Do you know of any other?

An. This is impossible, or what I have heard of her cannot be true.

Chrys. Heard! You have heard something about her then. Surely nothing bad?

An. Certainly nothing good.

Chrys. Well! I held the girl in high esteem. Surely no youngster has . . . . . Eh?

An. If it were no more than that . . . . fashion excuses such slight mistakes as that. But it is something much worse for a good maiden who does not want to be a maiden any longer.

Chrys. Something worse? I don't understand you.

An. And yet you are a business man.

Chrys. Worse? I always thought that reserve and good principles were the chief——

An. No longer, no longer; they were so twenty years ago, as you so wisely remembered just now.

Chrys. Explain yourself more clearly; I have no desire to guess at your silly thoughts.

An. Nothing is easier, however. In a word, she is said to have no money. People say that out of consideration for her father, who was a good friend of yours, you adopted Juliane from her ninth year, and brought her up out of charity.

Chrys. In saying that people told you no lie; but all the same, no other but my son shall have her, provided only that he . . . . look here, Anton, I must make the whole riddle plain to you. It lies only with me to make Juliane rich in a short time.

An. Yes, with your own money, and you might make me rich in the same manner; will you be so good?

Chrys. No, not with my own money. Can you hold your tongue?

An. Try it.

Chrys. Listen then. This is how it stands with Juliane's property. Her father lost all his money, through a lawsuit which at last he had to abandon, a short time before his death. Now, a certain document has fallen into my hands for which he long sought in vain, and which puts the whole business in another light. It is only necessary for me to give enough money to recommence the lawsuit. The document itself I have already sent to my lawyer at Dresden.

An. Heaven be praised that you are a business man again. Just now I hardly knew what to make of you. But have you Juliane's consent already?

Chrys. Oh, the good child will, as she says, obey me in all things. Until now Valer reckoned upon winning her. A little while ago, he even opened his heart to me. Before I found the document——

An. Of course, Juliane was not of so much importance to us then; so you gave him encouragement?

Chrys. Certainly. He has come back from Berlin to-day, and has been to call on me already. I fear, I fear . . . . . But if only my son will . . . . and he, Anton, you know . . . . A fool may be caught on many sides, and a man like you can catch on many sides. You shall see that I am grateful.

An. And you shall see that I am entirely at your service, especially if gratitude first rouses me, and——

Scene VII.—Anton, Chrysander, Juliane.

Ju. Come, Herr Chrysander, do come down at once. Herr Valer is there to wait upon you.

Chrys. You seem very happy about it, young miss.

An. (*whispers to Chrysander*). Ah! Valer has caught the bird already.

Chrys. That would be rather serious.

(*Exeunt* Anton *and* Chrysander).

Scene VIII.—Juliane, Lisette.

Lis. (*peeps out of the cabinet*). Hist, hist!

Ju. Well, for whom is that meant? Lisette, is that you? What are you doing here?

Lis. Yes, you will never believe that I and Damis have gone so far that he has to conceal me. I can twist him round my finger already. One more interview like the last, and I have bagged him.

Ju. And so, although in joke, I had a very good idea after all. Would to Heaven that the union which his father——

Lis. His father! the rascal, the miser! I have just learnt what he is.

Ju. What names you call him! His goodness is only too great. In order to make his good actions complete he offers me his son's hand, and with it all his property. But how unhappy am I in this. Gratitude and love, love for Valer, and gratitude——

Lis. A minute ago I was under just the same delusion. But, believe me, I have it now from his own lips; not from friendship for you, but from friendship to your property he wishes to bring about this union.

JU. My property? You are mad. What have I that I did not get from him?

LIS. Come, come. This is not the place for talking. I will tell you all that I have heard another time.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—LISETTE, VALER, JULIANE.

LIS. (*within*). Come in here; Damis has gone out. You can have a word with one another in private here.

JU. Yes, Valer; my resolution is taken. I owe him too much; by his kindness he has obtained the greatest right over me. Cost what it may, I must consent to this marriage, since Chrysander desires it. Or shall I sacrifice gratitude to love? You are yourself virtuous, Valer, and in your society I have learnt to think more nobly. To show myself worthy of you I must do my duty even at the loss of my happiness.

LIS. A marvellous moral, truly!

VA. Then what becomes of your promise, your vow, and your constancy? Is it right to act contrary to a duty which really unites us, in order to fulfil an imaginary one?

JU. Oh! Valer, you know better what belongs to such promises. Do not abuse my weakness. My father's approbation was not given to that promise.

VA. What father?

JU. The one to whom I am bound to give that title on account of his kindness. Do you consider it no benefit to be rescued from poverty and all its attendant miseries? Ah! Valer, I should not now possess your heart had not Chrysander's care caused me to be brought up in virtue and honour.

VA. Benefits cease to be benefits if one seeks to be repaid for them. And what else is Chrysander doing than this, my over-conscientious Juliane, seeing that he only wants to marry you to his son because he sees his way to recovering for himself the greater part of your patrimony?

Ju. Do not rely on such a strange report as this. Who knows what Lisette has heard?

Lis. Nothing but what fits in perfectly with the rest of his conduct. A man who has already trumpeted his good deeds abroad, who can count them on his fingers to any one, looks for something more than the mere reward of Heaven. And are these, then, the first tears you have shed through vexation at being dependent on such a selfishly liberal man?

Va. Lisette is right! . . . . But, alas, I feel it. Juliane no longer loves me.

Ju. She loves you no longer? This suspicion only was wanting to make her grief complete. If you knew how much it cost her to remain deaf to the promptings of love: if you knew, Valer. . . . . oh, how mistrustful men are!

Va. Do not misinterpret the fear of a lover whose whole happiness is at stake. So you do love me still, and yet you will give yourself to another?

Ju. Will? Could you torture me more cruelly?—"I will?" say, rather, "I must."

Va. You must! Never yet has a heart but the one that wished it been compelled to allege necessity as its excuse——

Ju. Your reproaches are so bitter, so bitter, that for vexation I shall leave you.

Va. Stay, Juliane, and say at least what I am to do in this matter.

Ju. As I do, submit to fate.

Va. Ah, leave innocent fate out of the question.

Ju. Innocent? You mean it is I that am to blame? Detain me no longer.

Lis. If I don't soon interfere, they will be quarrelling through sheer love. . . . . What you are to do, Herr Valer? A mighty question! Why, move Heaven and earth so that this good young lady "need not"! Bring the father to other thoughts; and get the son over to your side. . . . . The son is easy enough to manage; leave him to me. Poor dear Damis. I am without doubt the first girl to flatter him, and I hope therefore to be the first to be flattered by him. In good sooth, he is so vain, and I am so skilful that I would soon flatter him even

into making me his wife were it not for his confounded father! See now, Herr Valer, this is mistress Juliane's idea! Now do you invent some snare for the father.

Ju. What's that you say, Lisette? *My* idea? Oh Valer, don't believe such nonsense! Did I tell you to do anything more than to give him a bad opinion of me?

Lis. Exactly so, a bad opinion of you, and if possible a proportionally better one of myself.

Ju. There is no bearing with you——

Va. But, dearest Juliane, say, at all events——

Ju. Say what? Perhaps that I will rush into your arms, even though I should sin against all virtue in so doing! That I will strive to become yours with an eagerness, with a zeal, which must some day necessarily make me contemptible in your eyes? No, Valer——

Lis. Don't you hear, that she would rather leave us free to act! She is like the lovely Aspasia—or whatever the princess's name was in that thick novel. Two knights laid claim to her. "Fight with one another" said the lovely Aspasia; "he who overcomes the other shall have me." Nevertheless she favoured the knight in the blue armour more than the other——

Ju. Oh, the silly girl—bother her blue knight! (*Breaks away and runs off.*)

Scene II.—Lisette, Valer.

Lis. Ha, ha, ha!

Va. It is no joke to me, Lisette.

Lis. Not? Ha, ha, ha!

Va. I believe you are laughing at me.

Lis. Oh, laugh with me, then, or I shall have to laugh again because you won't. Ha ha, ha!

Va. I am in despair! In the uncertainty whether she loves me——

Lis. Uncertainty? Are all men so hard to convince? Do they all become such anxious doubters as soon as love warms them a little? Have done with those whims of yours, or I shall laugh again. Set your wits rather to work to plan something that old Chrysander——

Va. Chrysander does not trust me, and cannot trust me. He knows my feeling for Juliane. All my persuasion would be in vain. He would soon discover the interested motives which are its source. And if I were to make an actual offer of marriage what good would that do? He is outspoken enough to tell me to my face that I must waive my claim in favour of his son, who has the greatest right to Juliane, on account of his father's kindness to her. . . . . What, then, am I to do?

Lis. O those wonderful people, who want everywhere to go only along the level road. Listen what I have thought of. The document, or whatever the thingummybob is called, is the only reason for Chrysander's liking for this match, and he has sent it to his lawyer. How if we were to write a letter purporting to come from this advocate, in which. . . . . in which——

Va. In which he expressed his doubts as to the legality of the document you mean? The idea is not so bad. But suppose the lawyer happens to write just the opposite to him, then our deception will be discovered.

Lis. What an objection! Of course you must tune him up. It has always been usual for a lover to make some sacrifice.

Va. But suppose now the lawyer is an honest man.

Lis. You really go on as if you had only been in the world a month. As the present is, so is the lawyer. If nothing at all comes, the most contemptible swindler is the most honest of men. If something comes, but of no great value, his conscience still maintains its balance pretty well. Temptations may then arise, I dare say, but a very little consideration overthrows them! But only let really considerable advantages be offered, and straightway the most honest lawyer is no longer the most honest. He puts his honesty along with the gold pieces into his coffer where the former begins to rust before the latter. I know these gentlemen.

Va. Your judgment is too sweeping. All persons of the same profession have not the same sentiments. I know various honourable old attorneys——

Lis. What do you want with your old fellows. It is just as if you said that the great round cuffs, little pointed

buttons, the frightful ruffs big enough to make sails of, the broad square-toed shoes, the deep pockets, in short the whole get-up in which your fathers may have appeared on gala days, were still the fashion, because sometimes here and there one sees a few bent, tottering, old fellows creeping along the streets in that style of dress. Let them and your ancient old honest lawyers die in peace. Fashion and honesty are going the same road.

Va. One hears directly where the girl is most eloquent.

Lis. You mean, I suppose, where there is slander afloat? No, truly, I have not chattered so much for the sake of slander merely. My chief object was to make you see how much gold can do everywhere, and what an excellent game a suitor has in his hand, if he is liberal towards all —towards the lady, the lawyer and your humble servant. (*Makes a curtsey.*)

Va. Rely on my gratitude. I promise you a very considerable dowry, if all goes well——

Lis. Ah! How nice! A dowry! You hope, I suppose, that I shall be left an old maid?

Va. If you are afraid of that, I'll promise you the husband as well. But come, Juliane will be expecting us, doubtless. We will consider our business further in concert.

Lis. Go on before; I must wait here a little for my young sage——

Va. Perhaps he is already below with his father.

Lis. We must have our conversation alone. Go. You haven't spoken to him yet, of course?

Va. What wouldn't I give if I could dispense with that altogether. As far as he is concerned I would avoid this house more than bedlam, were it not that a more agreeable object——

Lis. Well, go, then, and don't keep this more agreeable object waiting for you any longer.

* * *

Scene III.—Anton, Lisette.

An. Hullo! What is she doing in my master's study? Valer went out just now, Juliane a little while before,

and you are still there. I do believe you hold your meetings here, Lisette; I shall let my master know this. I will have my revenge—for yesterday, do you remember?

Lis. I verily believe you are scolding! What about yesterday?

An. A box on the ear is soon forgotten by the giver, but he whose teeth have chattered from it thinks of it a good while. Just take care, just take care.

Lis. What right have you, then, to kiss me?

An. The deuce! How common boxes on the ear would be if every one who wanted to kiss you got one? Well, my master shall give you a fine——

Lis. Your master! He won't do much to me.

An. Won't he? How often has he not said that so holy a place as a study must not be profaned by such unsanctified creatures as you? That the god of learning. . . . . stay, what does he call him—Apollo—can't endure a woman. The very smell of them is disagreeable to him. He flies before them like the kite before the doves. . . . . And do you think my master would permit you to chase his beloved god out of the room?

Lis. Why, you fool, I believe you think that the good god will have nothing to do with any but you men? Hold your tongue, or——

An. Yes, another like yesterday's, perhaps.

Lis. A better one than that. The simpleton deserved more than one yesterday. He comes to me when it is dark; he wants to kiss me, I drive him off; he comes again, I hit him on the mouth; it hurts him, he leaves off; he scolds me and goes . . . . I could give you another, when I think of it.

An. And so I ought to have waited to see how often you would have repeated your caresses?

Lis. Granting some more would have followed, they would have become weaker and weaker; very likely the last ones would have altogether . . . . but such a stupid donkey deserves nothing.

An. What's that? Do you mean that really, Lisette? I could almost forget the box on the ears, and be reconciled to you again.

Lis. As you please about that. Of what importance

is your good-will to me now? I am on the track of quite other game now.

AN. Other game! Alas, Lisette! That is a box on the ears that I shall not forget so soon! Other game? I should have thought you would have been content with one who ran into your net of his own accord.

LIS. And that is just why he is of no value. . . . . But tell me, where is your master?

AN. Thank your stars that he stays away so long, and be off. If he catches you, you are in danger of being whipped out.

LIS. That's my affair. But where is he? Hasn't he come back from the post yet?

AN. How do you know that he has gone to the post.

LIS. Enough, I do know it. He wanted at first to send you. How came it that he went himself? Ha, ha! "It is quite impossible to do anything with the rascal." In truth, that piece of praise makes me quite in love with you.

AN. Who the dickens can have told you that?

LIS. Oh, nobody; only tell me—has he come back?

AN. A long time; he is downstairs with his father.

LIS. And what are they doing together?

AN. Doing? Quarrelling.

LIS. The son, of course, is trying to convince the father of his cleverness.

AN. Something of the sort, no doubt. Damis is quite beside himself. He won't let the old man put in a single word, he counts up to him a thousand books he has seen, a thousand he has read, a few more thousands he means to write, and a hundred booklets which he has already written. First he names a dozen professors who, not without cause, had given him a written certificate of merit with their seals set to it; then a dozen penny-a-liners, who make excellent trumpets for a young sage, if one puts silver mouthpieces on them; then a dozen journalists, who have humbly begged him to become their colleague. His father looks quite bewildered. He fears for his son's health, he keeps saying, "My son, don't excite yourself so;" "Spare your lungs;" "Just so;" "I believe you;" "Be contented;" "It wasn't meant in that way."

Lis. And Damis?

An. Damis keeps on. At last his father makes a final exertion. He outshouts him by sheer force, and pacifies him with such a mass of praise, as no one in the world ever has deserved, does deserve, or will deserve. Then the son becomes reasonable once more, and now. . . . . they pass to another subject, another matter, to——

Lis. To what, then?

An. Thank goodness, I can hold my tongue!

Lis. You won't tell it me?

An. Never. I am, it is true, an indifferent sort of fellow in other things, but when it is a question of silence——

Lis. Is that what you are like?

An. I thought you would have been pleased that I could hold my tongue; especially about marriage affairs, and what belongs to them——

Lis. Is that all you know? I knew that long ago.

An. How well she tries to take me in! So there was no need to tell you that?

Lis. Oh dear, no! But I know what I'll do to revenge myself for your rascally distrust of me. You shall not dare to keep a secret from a girl of my profession again. Do you remember in what terms you spoke of your master a short while ago?

An. Remember! Can a man who is up to his ears in work, and has so much to say all day long as I have, remember every trifle?

Lis. I should think that slandering your master was rather more than a trifle.

An. What! Slandering?

Lis. Ha, ha! You, sir, who are up to your ears in work, do you bethink yourself now. What was it you said about him to his father just now?

An. Either the girl has the devil in her, or that confounded old fellow must have blabbed. But come, Lisette, do you really know what I said? What was it, then? Just let me hear?

Lis. You will hear it all when I tell your master.

An. Oh, dear, I do believe you are in earnest. You surely don't want to ruin my credit with my master? If

you really know anything, don't be a fool! . . . . . You women never understand a joke. I have forgiven you a box on the ears and you are going to take revenge for a little bit of fun. I'll tell you everything, you know.

Lis. Tell me, then.

An. But you won't tell anything?

Lis. The more you tell, the less I'll tell.

An. What else should it be but that the father again proposed the marriage with Juliane to his son? Damis appeared to be listening, and. . . . . I can't tell you any more.

Lis. No more? Very well, then, your master shall hear everything.

An. For Heaven's sake, Lisette! . . . . . I will confess——

Lis. Confess, then.

An. I can only confess that I really did not hear anything more. I was sent away at the moment. You know well enough that when one is not on the spot one can't hear much——

Lis. That's clear. But what do you think,—will Damis make up his mind to it?

An. If he has not done so yet I shall do my utmost to make him. I am to be paid for my trouble, Lisette, and when I am paid, you know, then you also——

Lis. Yes, yes, I promise you; you shall be well paid! Just dare to do it.

An. What?

Lis. Just have the audacity——

An. What?

Lis. You blockhead! My young lady doesn't want your Damis——

An. What does that matter?

Lis. It follows that it is my will, too, that he should not get her.

An. It follows that, if my master wishes to have her, it must be my will that he shall get her.

Lis. Listen! You want to be my husband, and have a will of your own? Don't imagine that, my boy. Your will must be mine, or——

An. Hush! the deuce! He is coming! do you hear? He is coming! Now look for the hole the carpenter has left. At any rate, hide yourself; hide, or he will do for both of us.

Lis. (*aside*). Stop, I will take in both of them. Where shall I go? Where? Into the cabinet?

An. Yes, yes! in with you! Perhaps he'll go again soon. . . . . And I will sit down here quickly. (*Seats himself at the table, takes up a book, and pretends not to see* Damis.)

Scene IV.—Anton, Damis.

An. (*as if to himself*). Yes, these learned men, how happy they are! What an ass my father was not to have put me to that profession. By Jove! How delightful it must be to know everything in the world, as my master does. My stars! Fancy understanding all those books! If one merely sits among them, whether one reads them or not, one becomes at once quite another being. I feel it, I really do feel it, intellect is being exhaled over me from them. Certainly he is right; without learning man is nothing more than a brute. Stupid brute that I am. (*Aside*). I wonder how long he'll let me abuse myself. (*Aloud*). We are truly absurdly matched, I and my master. He yields to none in learning, I to none in ignorance. I will begin reading this very day. If I live to be eighty I may become a fine fellow yet. Only begin briskly. Here are books enough. I shall pick out the smallest, for one must not overdo it at first. Ah! Here I light on the loveliest of little books. Such a book will surely let itself be read and enjoyed. Begin at once, Anton. I suppose it does not matter which end you begin at. In truth, it would be a shame for my master, who is so marvellously, so fearfully, so horribly learned, were he to have such an ignorant servant any longer.

Da. (*coming close up to him*). Yes, certainly, it would be a shame for him.

An. Heaven help us! my master.

Da. Don't be frightened. I have heard all.

An. You have heard all? . . . . I beg a thousand pardons, if I have said anything wrong. I was so capti-

vated, so captivated by the beauty of learning—forgive me my stupid prank—that I wanted to become learned myself.

Da. Don't blame yourself for the wisest idea you ever had in your life.

An. Twenty years ago it might have been wise enough.

Da. Trust me, you are not yet too old to learn. We can already give several examples in our republic of men who in like manner did not throw themselves into the arms of the Muses earlier.

An. Not into their arms only! I will throw myself into their laps. But in what town do these people dwell?

Da. In what town?

An. Yes. I must go thither to make their acquaintance. They must tell me how to set about it.

Da. What do you mean by a town?

An. Do you fancy I don't know what a republic is? Saxony, for instance. And a republic contains more than one town? Doesn't it?

Da. What an idiot! I speak of the republic of the learned. What is Saxony, or Germany, or Europe, to us learned men? A sage like me belongs to the whole world; he is a cosmopolitan; he is a sun which must give light to the whole earth.

An. But surely the republic of the learned must be somewhere.

Da. Be somewhere, you stupid fellow? The republic of the learned is everywhere.

An. Everywhere? Then it is in the same place as the republic of fools. For I have been told that that too is everywhere.

Da. It is indeed true that fools and wise men, the learned and the ignorant, are everywhere intermingled, and that too in such a way that the latter always compose the majority. You can see that in our own household. By what a number of fools and ignorant persons do you find me surrounded here. Some of them know nothing, and know that they know nothing. You are among these. But they would like greatly to learn something, and on this account they are the most bearable of all. There are

others who know nothing and wish to know nothing; they think that they are happy in their ignorance; they shrink from the light of learning.

An. What a race of owls!

Da. There are others again who know nothing, and yet believe they know something. They have learnt nothing, absolutely nothing, and yet they want to appear as if they had learnt something. These are the most intolerable of all fools, and, to confess the truth, my father is one of them.

An. You surely are not going to make out that your father—bethink yourself,—your father, is an arch-fool?

Da. Learn to discriminate. I do not abuse my father in so far as he is my father, but in so far as I may regard him as one who wishes to usurp the credit of being learned without deserving it. In that respect he deserves my displeasure. I have often given him to understand how he irritates me when, as an old merchant, as a man who can know nothing except good and bad wares, about true and false money, and at the best only knows how to give away the one for the other—when he, I say, makes such a show with his school-boy scraps, of which I of course still remember something. In this regard he is a fool, be he my father or no.

An. What a pity, what an eternal pity that I did not know about "in so far" and "in that regard" when I was a youngster. My father should certainly not have thrashed me so often for nothing. He should have received as good as he gave, not in so far as he was my father, but in so far as he was one who struck me first. Hurrah for learning!

Da. Stop. I bethink me of a principle of natural law, which will support this idea excellently. I must just look it out in Hobbes. Patience! I will make a capital work out of this, you will see.

An. In order to prove that one may strike one's father back?

Da. By all means, *certo respectu*. But one must take care that when one strikes him, one intends to strike, not one's father, but the aggressor; for otherwise——

An. Aggressor? What sort of thing is that?

Da. So he is termed who gives the first blow.

An. Ha, ha! Now I understand. For instance, if, sir, one of those little fits of learned madness were to come over you again, which make themselves felt on my back by a good cudgelling, you would be . . . . . what is it? . . . . . the aggressor; and I should be entitled to get hold of the aggressor, and——

Da. You are mad, fellow.

An. Don't be alarmed; I think I should know how to regulate my thoughts so as to put the master aside for the time.

Da. Well, in truth, that would be a remarkable example of what fatal errors a man may fall into if he does not know on what principle one truth or another is to be decided. The thrashings which a servant gets from his master do not come under the natural law, but the civil law. When a servant hires himself out, he hires his back out at the same time. Observe this principle.

An. That is civil law, is it? What a vile law. But now I see. That confounded learning can just as well help one to blows as protect one from them. What wouldn't I give if I could comprehend all its subtleties as easily as you. . . . . Oh, Herr Damis, take pity on my stupidity.

Da. Well, if you really mean it, set to work. I am pleased to have made a proselyte to learning by my example. I will give you ample support by my advice and instruction. If you make anything of it I promise to introduce you to the learned world myself, and make you known to it by a special work. Perhaps I may take the opportunity to write something *De eruditis sero ad literas admissis* or *De opsimathia* or even *De studio senili*, and so you will become famous at once. But just let me see if there is much to expect from this thirst for knowledge of yours? What book had you in your hand just now?

An. It was a very little one——

Da. Which?

An. It was delightfully bound, with gilt back and edges. Wherever did I put it? There, there.

Da. That one? That?

An. Yes, that!

Da. That?

An. Have I done wrong? As it was so nice and small——

Da. I could not myself have suggested a better one for you.

An. I thought it must be a good book. Would it otherwise have such a good dress?

Da. It is a book that has no equal. I wrote it myself. Do you see? . . . . . *Auctore Damide.*

An. You wrote it? Well, I have always heard that people keep their own children better dressed than their step-children. That shows paternal love.

Da. In this book I have, so to speak, surpassed myself. As often as I read it, I learn something new from it.

An. From your own book?

Da. Are you surprised at that? . . . . The deuce! I just remember—good Heavens!—the poor girl! She can't still be hidden in the cabinet? (*Goes towards it.*)

An. In Heaven's name, where are you going?

Da. What now? To the cabinet. Have you seen Lisette?

An. Now I am lost! No, Herr Damis, no; as I live she is not in there.

Da. You saw her go out then. Has she been gone long?

An. I haven't seen her go in, on my honour. She is not there; only believe me she is not there——

Scene V.—Lisette, Damis, Anton.

Lis. Assuredly she is still in.

An. Oh, the wretch!

Da. Have you remained here all this time? Poor Lisette! I didn't at all want you to do that. As soon as my father was out of the room you might have come out again.

Lis. But I didn't know whether I should be doing right, so I preferred to wait until he who had hidden me bid me come out again.

An. The devil! what hiding are they talking about? (*Asid. to* Lisette). So, my sly little kitten! Has my

master himself hidden you once before? Now I know how to interpret that box on the ears yesterday. You false one!

Lis. Be quiet; don't say a word about my having been with you just now, or . . . . . you know what——

Da. What are you two chattering about together there? May not I hear it?

Lis. Nothing. I merely told him to go downstairs, so that he could tell my young lady, if she asks for me, that I am gone out. Juliane is suspicious; but I suppose she would seek me here if she wanted me.

Da. That's sensible. Off with you, Anton.

An. Do you wish it really, Lisette?

Lis. Certainly, go, leave us alone.

Da. Will you go at once?

An. But just consider for yourself, Herr Damis; when her chattering becomes wearisome to you, which will be very soon, who is to help you to drive her out of the room, if I am not by?

Lis. Just wait and I'll give your slanderous mouth——.

Da. Don't be uneasy. When she becomes troublesome to me I doubt not she will have the sense to go of her own accord.

An. But just consider; a woman in your study! What will your god say to you? He does not like the vermin, you know.

Lis. Shall I have to turn you out of the room?

An. That would be delightful. The confounded girls. They can flatter themselves into favour with old Harry himself. (*Exit.*)

Scene VI.—Lisette, Damis.

Da. And where were we when we left off?

Lis. Where were we? On the subject of which I always hear and speak with the greatest pleasure—your praise. If only it were not such a delicate matter to praise a man to his face! . . . . I can't possibly put you to the torture.

Da. But I assure you, Lisette, again, I am indifferent to the praise. I should merely like to hear, in what

different ways different people have viewed the same subject.

Lis. Each one praised in you that particular quality which he thought was deserving of commendation in himself. For instance, the fat little man, with the serious air who laughs so rarely, but who when he does once begin, overturns the whole table with the shaking of his stomach——

Da. Who is that, pray? I cannot guess from your description. Descriptions are ticklish things. It is no easy matter to make them so that one may recognise the thing described at the first glance. But nothing amuses me more than the frequency with which I meet with descriptions instead of definitions in the works of this and that great philosopher—of men, positively, who have given their names to whole sects. That happens because these good gentlemen have more imagination than judgment. In defining, the intellect must probe into the interior of things; but in describing, one must only regard the external characteristics, the——

Lis. We are departing from our subject, Herr Damis. Your praise.

Da. Certainly; go on, Lisette. Of whom was it that you were just going to speak?

Lis. Eh? Don't you know the little man, then? He is always puffing out his cheeks——

Da. Perhaps she means the old Councillor?

Lis. Right, but his name——

Da. What does it matter?

Lis. "Yes, Herr Chrysander," said the Councillor whose name doesn't matter, "your son may one day become one of the best councillors in the world, if he will only apply himself to it. The office requires an alert mind, which he has; nimble tongue, which he has; a deep insight into politics, which he has; a power of putting the thoughts neatly on paper, which he has; a subtle attentiveness to the slightest movements of turbulent citizens, which he has; and if he has them not—practice, practice! I remember how it was with me at first. Of course one cannot bring the ability for so hard an office with one into the world——

Da. The fool! It is indeed true that I possess all these abilities, but with the half of them I might become an Alderman, and not a mere——

Scene VII.—Anton, Lisette, Damis.

Da. Now then, what are you back here for?

An. Mistress Juliane knows now that Lisette has gone out. Don't be afraid; she won't disturb us.

Da. Who told you to come back here?

An. Could I leave my master alone, do you think? And besides such a qualm came over me all at once, such an anxiety; my ears began to tingle, especially the left one. . . . . Lisette, Lisette!

Lis. What do you want?

An. (*aside to Lisette*). What have you two been about alone? I bet it was something about me.

Lis. Be off;—I don't know what the fool wants.

Da. Go, Anton; it is high time; you must go to the post again. I don't know at all why it is so late. . . . . Will you go at once?

An. Come with me, Lisette.

Da. Why should Lisette go with you?

An. And why should she be with you?

Da. You ignoramus!

An. Yes, truly it is my misfortune that I am ignorant. (*Aside to Lisette*). Speak rather loud, at any rate, so that I can hear what passes between you—I shall listen. (*Exit.*)

Scene VIII.—Lisette, Damis.

Lis. Let us speak rather low. You know we are not secure from listeners.

Da. Good. Go on, then, softly.

Lis. You know Herr Chrysander's confessor, do you not?

Da. Confessor? Do you expect me to know all such literary botchers.

Lis. He, at any rate, seemed to know you very well. "Herr Damis might certainly become," said he, interrupting the fat Councillor, "a good preacher, too. I believe

that I have observed in him in a high degree, all the requisite qualifications; a fine physique, a strong clear voice, a good memory, a refined style of delivery, a becoming confidence, a ripe intellect which can hold boldly to its own opinion. I am only afraid about one point. I fear, I fear, that he too is a little infected by freethinking ideas." . . . . "Eh? Freethinking?" shouted the doctor, who was already half tipsy. "The freethinkers are right good fellows! Will he be unable to cure anybody on this account. If I had my way, he should become a doctor. He knows Greek, and Greek is half the art of medicine," (*gradually raising her voice again*). "In truth, one cannot give oneself the courage needful for that. Yet it comes by itself if one has only practised a little." "Ah!" interrupted an old merchant, "it is with you medical gentlemen, I suppose, as with the executioners: the first time they behead a man they shudder and quake; but the oftener they repeat their experiment the brisker it goes." At this remark, they laughed a whole quarter of an hour, —on and on,—they even forgot their drinking over it.

Scene IX.—Lisette, Damis, Anton.

An. The post, sir, will not come in before nine o'clock to-day. I have inquired. You can rely on that.

Da. Must you disturb us again already, idiot?

An. I shall be very glad if I have disturbed you just in time.

Da. What do you mean by "in time?"

An. I will make my meaning clearer to Lisette. May I speak a word in her ear?

Lis. What have you to say in my ear?

An. Only one word (*speaking low*). Do you think I haven't listened? Didn't you say you "had not courage enough for that? but if only you had practised a little?" . . . . . Oh! I heard it all. To cut the matter short, our ways lie in different directions. You shameless, horrid——

Lis. Speak out, do, what you mean.

Da Get out of my sight again at once! And don't appear in my presence again, until I call you, or until

you bring me letters from Berlin. . . . . I can hardly bear this waiting. . . . . Such is the result of excessive joy. I ought by rights to call it hope, since joy belongs to the present, hope to the future. But in this case the future is already as certain as the present. I use the language of the prophets who, however, can hardly have been so certain of their matters as I. The whole Academy must be blind, if. . . . . What! are you standing there still? Will you be off?

Scene X.—Lisette, Damis.

Lis. There you see. That is how these people praised you.

Da. Oh! If they can't praise better than that, they might as well leave it alone altogether. I don't wish to boast, but for this much I surely can give myself credit without arrogance. I shall leave my bride the choice whether she prefers having a Doctor of Divinity, of Law, or of Medicine, as her husband. I have graduated in all three faculties, in all I have——

Lis. You speak of a bride? Are you, then, really going to marry?

Da. Has she, too, heard of it already, Lisette?

Lis. Does a marriage come about in any house whatever, without the likes of us? But I could never have imagined that you would decide on Juliane—on Juliane!

Da. I do this chiefly to please my father, who urges me in this matter in the most unusual way. I am quite aware that Juliane is not worthy of me. But shall I offend my father about such a trifle as marriage? And besides, I have a fancy, which he will indulge me in.

Lis. Yes, in truth, Juliane is not worthy of you; and if only every one knew my mistress as well as I do——

Scene XI.—Anton, Damis, Lisette.

An. (*aside*). I cannot leave these people alone in this way. . . . . Herr Valer asks whether you are in your room? Are you still there, Herr Damis?

Da. Just tell me, you ignorant lout, have you made it your special object to-day to annoy me?

Lis. Let him stay there, Herr Damis. He will not keep away, you'll see.

An. Yes, now I shall stay; now, perhaps, when what I must not hear or see is already over.

Da. What is over?

An. You know very well.

Lis. (*speaking low*). Help me, now, Anton, to make Juliane as black as we can in your master's estimation. Will you?

An. Yes, very likely; by way of gratitude, perhaps——

Lis. Hold your tongue, then, at any rate. . . . . Of necessity, Herr Damis, you will get on ill with Juliane. I feel pity for you beforehand. The whole world does not contain a worse girl——

An. Don't believe it, Herr Damis; Juliane is a right good child. You could not get on better with any one in the world. I wish you happiness beforehand.

Lis. Really? You must be very kindly disposed towards your master, when you want to prate such an intolerable nuisance round his neck.

An. And you must be a good deal more kindly disposed towards your young mistress, when you grudge her so good a husband as Herr Damis will prove.

Lis. A good husband! Of a truth, a good husband is all she desires. A man who will permit everything——

An. Ho, ho! Everything? Do you hear, Herr Damis, for what Lisette takes you? On this account you would like to be his wife yourself, I suppose? Everything, eh? That everything includes, I suppose. . . . . you understand me, of course?

Da. But in earnest, Lisette. Do you really believe your young lady will make a thoroughly bad wife? Has she truly many bad qualities?

Lis. Many? She has all that any one can have, not excepting those which contradict one another.

Da. Will you not give me a list of them?

Lis. What shall I begin with? She is silly.

Da. A trifle.

An. And I say—a lie.

Lis. She is quarrelsome.

DA. A trifle.
AN. And I say—a lie.
LIS. She is vain.
DA. A trifle.
AN. A lie! say I.
LIS. She is no housewife.
DA. A trifle.
AN. A lie!
LIS. By extravagant show, by constant pleasure parties, and feasts, she will ruin you.
DA. A trifle.
AN. A lie.
LIS. She will hang the anxiety of a host of children on your neck for you.
DA. A trifle.
AN. The best wives are the first to do that.
LIS. But children that are not your own.
DA. A trifle.
AN. And a trifle, too, that is fashionable!
LIS. A trifle? What do you mean, Herr Damis?
DA. I mean that Juliane cannot be bad enough. Is she silly? I am so much the more sensible. Is she quarrelsome? I am so much the calmer. Is she vain? I am so much the more philosophically minded. Is she lavish? She will cease when she has nothing more. Is she prolific? Then she will see what she can do when she tries to get the better of me. Let each immortalise itself as it can; women through children, men through books.
AN. But don't you see that Lisette must have an object in slandering Juliane in this way.
DA. Ah! Truly, I do perceive it. She does not grudge me to her, and therefore describes her completely in accordance with my taste. She has no doubt concluded that I will only marry her mistress because she is the most unbearable of girls.
LIS. Only for that? Only for that? I have concluded that? I must have supposed you weak in the head, then. Just consider——
DA. You go too far, Lisette! Do not you give me credit for thinking at all? What I have said is the result of only too severe thought. Yes, it is settled. I mean to

increase the number of the apparently unhappy learned, who have married bad wives. This resolution is not of to-day.

An. Well, really! What is there the devil can't do? Whoever would have let himself dream of it, and now it is to become true. I must laugh; Lisette wanted to draw him out of the marriage and only urged him the more to it, and I wanted to urge him to it, and should soon have dissuaded him from it.

Da. One must marry some time or other. I cannot calculate on a thoroughly good wife; so I choose a thoroughly bad one. A wife of the ordinary kind, who is neither cold nor warm, neither very good nor very bad, is of no use to a learned man, of no use whatever. Who will concern himself about her after his death? And yet he deserves that his whole house shall be immortal with himself. If I can't have a wife who will one day find a place in a treatise *De bonis eruditorum uxoribus*, I will at least, have one with whose name an industrious man may enlarge his collection *De malis eruditorum uxoribus.* Yes, yes; besides I owe it to my father as his only son to take the most careful consideration for the maintenance of his name.

Lis. I can hardly get over my amazement. . . . . I have considered you, Herr Damis, such a great soul——

Da. And not wrongly. In this very matter I consider that I give the strongest proof of it.

Lis. I could almost burst! . . . . Yes, yes, the strongest proof that no one is so hard to catch as a young scholar. Not so much on account of his insight and shrewdness, as of his folly.

Da. What impertinence! A young scholar? a young scholar?

Lis. I will spare you the rebukes. Valer shall at once have intelligence of all. Your servant. (*Exit*).

Scene XII.—Anton, Damis.

An. There, you see! She runs off now, as you won't dance to her piping.

Da. *Mulier, non homo!* I shall soon accept this paradox as truth. By what does one show that one is a human

being? By reason. By what does one show that one has reason? When one knows how to value properly learning and the learned. A woman can never do this, and therefore she has no reason, and therefore is not a human being. Yes, indeed, yes. In this paradox lies more truth than in twenty manuals.

An. What was I saying? Did not I tell you that Herr Valer has been asking for you? Won't you go and speak to him?

Da. Valer? I will wait for him. The time when he stood high in my estimation is past. He has laid his books aside for some years. He has had the notion put into his head that one must give oneself the last finish by social intercourse and knowledge of the world, to render useful service to the state. What more can I do than pity him? And yet I shall at last have to feel ashamed of him too. I shall have to feel ashamed of having ever held him worthy of my friendship. Oh, how fastidious one ought to be in one's friendships. Yet what has it availed me that I have been so in the highest degree? In vain have I avoided all acquaintance with mediocre persons, in vain have I striven to associate only with genius, only with original minds; notwithstanding this Valer deceived me under the mask of such a one. Oh Valer, Valer!

An. Let it be loud enough, if he is to hear it.

Da. I could have burst with rage at his cold compliments. Of what did he speak with me? Of worthless trifles. And yet he came from Berlin, and might have been the first to inform me of the most pleasing of all news. Oh, Valer, Valer!

An. Hush! He is coming, really. You see he does not let himself be called three times.

Scene XIII.—Damis, Valer, Anton.

Va. Pardon me, dearest friend, for disturbing you in your studious tranquillity——

An. He had better say "idleness" at once.

Da. Disturbing? Do I imagine you would come to disturb me! No, Valer, I know you too well; you come to bring me the most pleasing news, which is worthy of

the attention of a scholar who is expecting his reward . . . . . A chair, Anton! . . . . . Sit down.

Va. You are mistaken, my dear friend. I come to complain of your father's fickleness. I come to ask an explanation from you, on which my whole happiness will depend.

Da. Oh! I could see at once from your manner that my father's presence prevented you just now from speaking to me more confidentially, and expressing your joy to me at the honour which the just decision of the Academy——

Va. No, my all too learned friend; let us speak for a moment of something less indifferent.

Da. Something less indifferent? Is my honour then a matter of indifference to you? False friend!

Va. That title will befit you if you divert me longer from that which, for a tender heart, is all important. Is it true that you wish to marry Juliane, and that your father means to bind this too fond girl by bonds of gratitude, to act less freely in her choice? Have I ever made a secret with you of my love for Juliane? Have you not always promised me to assist my love.

Da. You are getting warm, Valer, and forget that the cause is a woman. Put this trifle out of your thoughts . . . . . You must have been in Berlin when the Academy adjudged the prize for this year. The subject was "The Monads." Have not you chanced to hear that the motto——

Va. How cruel you are, Damis! Answer me, do.

Da. And you won't answer me? Think. Has not the prize been assigned to the motto *Unum est necessarium?* I flatter myself at least——

Va. I shall soon flatter myself about nothing at all when I see you so evasive. I shall soon have to believe, too, that the report which I took for a joke of Lisette's is true. You consider Juliane unworthy of you, you hold her to be the shame of her sex, and for this very reason you are going to marry her. What a monstrous idea!

Da. Ha, ha, ha!

Va. Yes, laugh on, Damis, laugh on. I am a fool for being able to believe such folly of you for a moment. Either you have made fun of Lisette, or she has made fun

of me. No! such a resolution could only enter a disordered brain! To hold it in abhorrence one needs only to think reasonably—far from nobly—as we know you are wont to think. But solve for me, I implore you, this torturing enigma.

DA. You will soon succeed, Valer, in drawing my attention to your gossip. So you really desire that I should subordinate my fame to your silly fancy? My fame! But in truth, I will rather believe you are joking. You wish to try if I, too, am unstable in my resolutions.

VA. I joking? Cursed be the joke which enters my mind!

DA. I shall be the better pleased if you will talk seriously. What I say to you is, the paper with the motto *Unum est necessarium*——

SCENE XIV.—CHRYSANDER, DAMIS, VALER, ANTON.

CHRYS. (*with a newspaper in his hand*). Well, is it not so, Herr Valer? my son is not to be dissuaded from the marriage. Don't you see that it is not so much I as he who is bent on this marriage?

DA. I! I am bent on the marriage?

CHRYS. Hist! hist!

DA. What does "Hist! hist!" mean? My honour suffers in this. Might not people think that I cared, who knows how much, for a wife?

CHRYS. Hist, hist!

VA. Oh, pray don't stand upon ceremony. I see it well enough! You are both against me. What ill-fortune it is which brought me into this house. I meet an amiable being, I please her, and yet I must after many hopes, in the end lose all hope. Damis, if I ever had any right to your friendship——

DA. But isn't it so, Valer? For one thing one must be angry with the Berlin Academy. Just think, in future the subjects for the prize essays will be made known two years previously. Why two years? Wasn't one enough? Does it take the Germans for such dawdlers? Since its revival, I have sent in my treatise every year, but, without boasting, I have never worked at any more than a week.

Chrys. But do you know, you good people, what has occurred in the Netherlands? I have the very latest newspaper here. They have come to blows pretty smartly. But I really am quite angry with the allies. Haven't they made a strange business of it again?

An. Now, there they are, all three talking about different things. The one talks of love, another of his treatises, and the third of war. If I, too, am to talk about anything special, it shall be about supper. To fast from mid-day till six o'clock in the afternoon is no joke.

Va. Unhappy love.

Da. That ill-advised Academy.

Chrys. Those stupid allies.

An. The fourth voice is still wanting;—those dawdling meat-jacks.

Scene XV.—Lisette, Damis, Valer, Chrysander, Anton.

Lis. Well, Herr Chrysander, I thought you were gone to call the gentlemen to supper, but I see you want to be called yourself. Supper is already on the table.

An. It was high time. Heaven be praised!

Chrys. Quite true, quite true, I had almost forgotten it altogether. The newsman stopped me on the stairs. Come, Herr Valer; we will consider the present state of the country together over a glass of something. Put Juliane out of your head. And you, my son, may chat with your bride. You will have a capital wife; not such a Xantippe as——

Da. Xantippe? How do you mean? Are you, too, still under the popular delusion that Xantippe was a bad wife?

Chrys. Do you mean to consider her a good one, then? You surely are not going to defend Xantippe? Pshaw! That is an A, B, C blunder. I believe the more you learned ones learn the more you forget.

Da. I maintain, however, that you cannot produce a single valid piece of evidence for your view. That is the first thing which makes the whole matter suspicious, and for the rest——

Lis. This everlasting palaver.

Chrys. Lisette is right. My son, *contra principia negantem non est disputandum.* Come, come!

(*Exeunt* Chrysander, Damis *and* Anton.)

Va. Now all is over with me, Lisette. What am I to do?

Lis. I know of nothing; unless the letter——

Va. This deceit would be too bad, and Juliane will not agree to it.

Lis. Eh, deceit? If deceit is useful, it is admissible. I see clearly I shall have to do it myself. Come away, now, and take courage again. (*Exeunt.*)

ACT III.

Scene I.—Lisette, Anton.

Lis. Wait, Anton, will you?

An. Leave me alone. I do not want to have anything to do with you.

Lis. Shan't we make it up again, then? Will not you do what I asked you?

An. I am to do something to please you?

Lis. Anton, dear Anton, darling Anton, do do it. How easily you can give the old man the letter and tell him the postman has brought it.

An. Go, you serpent! (*Aside*) How she can wheedle now! (*Aloud*) Don't stop me; I must fetch my master a book. Let me go.

Lis. Fetch your master a book? What does he want with a book at table?

An. He finds the time long; and if he does not want to be idle, he must make himself something to do, I suppose.

Lis. He finds the time long? At table? Now if it was in church. Don't they talk at all, then?

An. Not a word. I am a rogue if a funeral meal could go off as quietly.

Lis. At any rate, the old man will talk.

An. He talks without talking. He eats and speaks at

once; and I believe he would give, who knows what, if he could drink too as well, all three of them at once. The newspaper lies by his plate, one eye is on this and the other on that. He chews with one jaw and speaks with the other. So of course it cannot be otherwise than that his words should stick on what he is chewing, so that with much difficulty one just hears him mutter.

Lis. But what are the rest doing?

An. The rest? Valer and Juliane look half-dead. They don't eat and don't speak; they look at each other; they sigh; they drop their eyes; they glance first at the father, then at the son; they turn white; they turn red. Both rage and despair glance from the eyes of both; but, hurrah! quite right! Don't you see it can't go as you want? My master will have Juliane, and if——

Lis. Yes, your master! But what is he doing?

An. Nothing but silly tricks. He scratches on his plate with his fork; hangs his head; moves his mouth, as if he were talking to himself, wabbles his chair about, then upsets a wine glass, lets it lie, does not seem to notice anything until the wine is going to run on to his clothes; he flies into a passion and even says that I spilt it. But enough chattering; he will swear at me if I don't fetch him the book soon. I must look for it. It is on the table at the right hand side, he says. Yes, on the right hand; but which right hand does he mean? If I come so, this is the right hand; if so, this; if I come this way, it is this; and it is this, if I come like this (*approaching all four sides of the table*). Tell me now, Lisette, which is the right right hand?

Lis. I know that as little as you. Bother the book; let him bring it himself. But, Anton, we are forgetting the most important thing, the letter——

An. What, your letter again? Think. Am I to deceive my master on your account?

Lis. But it shall be no loss to you.

An. Really? Isn't it my loss if I have to give up what Chrysander has promised me?

Lis. But Valer promised you that you shall lose nothing.

An. Where does he promise me that, please?

Lis. Strange fellow! I promise it you in his name.

An. And even if you keep your word in his name, a lot I shall get! No, no. A sparrow in the hand is better than a dove on the roof.

Lis. But if you are sure of catching the dove, it will be better than the sparrow, I suppose.

An. Sure of catching! As if everything let itself be caught. If I want to seize the dove, I must let the sparrow fly out of my hand. Eh?

Lis. Let it fly, then.

An. Good. And now suppose the dove, too, makes off. No, no, young woman, Anton is not so stupid as that.

Lis. What a childish fuss you do make! Think how fortunate you may be.

An. How, then? Let me hear.

Lis. Valer has promised to give me a dowry. What are a thousand thalers to such a capitalist?

An. Is that what you reckon on?

Lis. I take it at the lowest. He wouldn't let you go away empty-handed either, if you were helpful to me. Then I should have money, and you too would have money; couldn't we become a most charming couple?

An. We? A couple? Ah! if my master hadn't hidden you.

Lis. Are not you downright silly? Why, I have told you all that passed between us. Your master, that dear book-worm!

An. Yes, those book-worms, too, are cursed animals. It is quite true a girl like you with a thousand thalers is worth at least a thousand thalers; but still that cabinet, that cabinet——

Lis. Do stop, Anton, and don't let one beg you so long.

An. But why won't you give the old man the letter yourself?

Lis. I have told you the reasons for that; Chrysander could so easily suspect——

An. Yes, yes, you little monkey, I see it well enough; you want to have the chestnuts out of the ashes, and you use a cat's paw for them.

Lis. Very well, my dear puss, do it, then.

An. How she does get over one! Dear puss! Well, give it here—the letter, give it me.

Lis. There, my incomparable Anton.

An. But it is all right about the dowry, I suppose?——

Lis. Rely on it——

An. And about my reward besides?

Lis. That it is.

An. Very well, the letter will be delivered.

Lis. But as soon as possible.

An. At once, if you like. Come! . . . . . My stars. who is coming? The deuce! It is Damis.

Scene II.—Damis, Anton, Lisette.

Da. Where is that rascal dawdling with the book?

An. I was just going to, I was. . . . . Lisette and . . . . . in short, Herr Damis, I can't find it.

Da. Not find it! Why, I told you on which side it was?

An. On the right hand, you certainly did say; but not on which right hand. And that is what I was just coming to ask you.

Da. You blockhead, can't you guess that I speak of the side where I sit?

An. That is true, too, Lisette; and we have been cracking our brains over this! Herr Damis is really cleverer than we are (*makes a long nose behind* Damis's *back*). Now I shall find it, I suppose. Bound in white with red edges, is it not? Go, please, I will bring it at once.

Da. Yes, it is time now, when we have already risen from table.

An. Already? The deuce, I have not had enough yet. Have you all got up.

Da. My father will still be there, learning the newspaper by heart, that he may play the politician at his club to-morrow. Go at once if you think you can be filled with his political scraps. But what does Lisette want here?

Lis. Am I not as bearable now as I was before?

Da. No, assuredly not. I thought before that Lisette had at least so much sense that her chatter could be bearable for a quarter of an hour; but I was mistaken. She is as stupid as the rest of the household.

Lis. I have the honour to give thanks in the name of all the others.

An. The deuce! Why, that is quite a different tone. Heaven grant they may have a good quarrel. But I should not care to listen. . . . . Lisette, I'll go at once.

Lis. (*aside to him*). Don't forget the letter; be quick about it.

Da. So. Have you to ask Lisette for permission? I order you; stay where you are. I should like to know where you had to go.

An. To the post, Herr Damis, to the post.

Da. Ah! that's true; go then, go.

Scene III.—Damis, Lisette.

Da. Lisette can also take herself off at once. Is my room never to be empty to-day? First that man is here, then this; then this woman, then that. Am I not to be alone a moment? (*seats himself at the table*). The Muses demand solitude, and nothing chases them away sooner than a tumult. I have so much, and such important business, that I don't know where to begin first, and yet people disturb me. The greater part of the afternoon has been spent on such a worthless matter as marriage. Is my evening, too, to be snatched away through this eternal running in and out? I believe that in no household can idleness reign as in this.

Lis. And particularly in this room.

Da. In this room? Uneducated, ignorant girl.

Lis. Is that reproach or praise?

Da. What a low-minded being! To think of deeming ignorance and stupidity no reproach! No reproach? I should just like to know what conceptions of shame and honour such a deranged babbler has. Perhaps we shall hear that with her learning is a reproach.

Lis. Certainly, if it is always of the same stamp as in you.

Da. No, that it is not; very few have carried it so far——

Lis. That one cannot decide whether they are foolish or learned?

Da. I could go out of my mind——

Lis. Do it, and get into a wiser one.

Da. How long shall I yet be exposed to the abuse of this most worthless creature?. . . . . Thousands would count themselves happy if they had only the tenth part of my deserts. I am only twenty years of age, and how many should I find who, with almost three times these years, are yet. . . . . But I speak in vain. What honour can it bring me to convince an idiotic creature of my ability. I understand seven languages perfectly, and am only twenty years old. On the whole compass of history, and all branches of knowledge allied to it, I am without equal——

Lis. And you are only twenty years old.

Da. How strong I am in philosophy is proved by the high degree which I attained even three years ago. The world will recognise it yet more unmistakeably in my treatise on Monads. . . . . Ah! that confounded post.

Lis. And you are only twenty years old.

Da My satirical panegyric on "The Nymph of Posterity," can give an everlasting proof of my more than Demosthenic eloquence.

Lis. And you are only twenty years old.

Da. In poetry too, I may fairly reach out my hand towards the most imperishable laurels. In comparison with me, Milton shrinks to nothing, and Haller beside me is a mere babbler. My friends to whom hitherto I have often read over my attempts, as I am pleased to call them, will now hear no more of them, and always assure me most sincerely that they are already sufficiently convinced of my more than godlike poetical vein.

Lis. And you are only twenty years old.

Da. In short, I am a philologist, an historian, a philosopher, an orator, a poet——

Lis. And you are only twenty years old! A beardless philosopher, and an orator who is not yet of age; beautiful rarities.

Da. Be off! Out of my room this instant.

Lis. This instant? I should like so much to bring in that nice sentence once more—and you are only twen'y

years old. Have you nothing more to say in your own praise? Oh, something more! Won't you? Then I'll do it myself. Listen well, Herr Damis: you are not yet wise, and you are already twenty years old!

DA. What? How? (*Gets up angrily*).

LIS. Good-bye, good-bye!

DA. Good Heavens! What one has to endure from these uneducated brutes! Is it possible that an ignorant female——

SCENE IV.—CHRYSANDER, ANTON, DAMIS.

CHRYS. This is an accursed letter, Anton. Eh, eh! My son, my son, *post cœnam stabis, vel passus mille meabis.* You surely are not going to sit down again so soon?

DA. Others, who have nothing to do, may trouble themselves about such barbarous rules of health. Important business——

CHRYS. What have *you* got to say about important business?

DA. I? Why not, father? Most of the books which you see here on the table are waiting, some for my notes, some for my translation, some for my refutation, some for my defence, and some also for my mere opinion.

CHRYS. Let them wait. Now——

DA. Now I really can't do everything at once. If I could only get the most important of them settled. You have no idea, what investigation and brain-racking a certain inquiry here costs me. A single trifle is still wanting to enable me to prove that Cleopatra applied the snakes to her arm and not to her breast——

CHRYS. Snakes don't do much good anywhere. One almost crept into my bosom, too, a short time ago; but there is still time. Listen a moment, my son; I have here received a letter which——

DA. How? A letter? A letter? My dear Anton, a letter. My dearest father, a letter? From Berlin? Don't keep me in suspense any longer. Where is it? Now you will cease to doubt, will you not, of my ability? How happy I am! Anton, do you, too, know already what it contains?

CHRYS. What means this extravagance? The letter is

not from Berlin; it is from my lawyer in Dresden, and from what he writes your marriage with Juliane can come to nothing.

Da. Worthless fellow! So you haven't been to the post yet?

An. Why I have told you that before nine o'clock there is nothing for me to go to the post for.

Da. Ah! *Verberabilissime, non fur, sed trifur!* Heavens, that through anger, I should have to use even the abusive language of Plautus. Will a fruitless run kill you, then?

An. Are you abusing me? As I have not understood it, let it pass.

Chrys. But just tell me, Damis; you still have a little feeling of repugnance to Juliane, haven't you? If that is so I will not force you. You must know I am not one of those fathers——

Da. Is marriage again on the carpet so soon? If only you would not trouble yourself about my repugnance. Enough, I marry her——

Chrys. That means, you are going to force yourself to do so on my account. I will not have that at all. If you are my son, you are still a man; and every man is born free; he must be able to do as he pleases; and . . . . . in short, I give you your word back again.

Da. Back again? And a few hours ago I could not make up my mind fast enough for you. How am I to understand that?

Chrys. You are to understand it in this way, that I have considered it, and that since Juliane does not please you she does not suit me either; that I have learned what her real circumstances are from this letter, and that . . . . . You see of course that I have only just received the letter. Indeed, I don't really know what I am to think of it? It is not my lawyer's own handwriting, certainly. (Damis *seats himself at the table again.*)

An. Not? Oh, the good people must know how to write more than one hand.

Chrys. It is almost too soon, as well. It is scarcely eight days since I wrote to him. Can he have inquired into the matter already, in so short a time? From whom did you get the letter, Anton?

An. From Lisette.

Chrys. And Lisette?

An. From the postman, no doubt.

Chrys. But why doesn't the fellow bring the letters to me himself?

An. They could not alter themselves in the hands they pass through, could they?

Chrys. One doesn't know. . . . . The reasons, however, which he brings forward are worth listening to. So I must take the safest road, I suppose; and to you, my son . . . . but I do believe you have seated yourself at the table again, and are studying.

Da. Good Heavens! I have work to do; I have a great deal of work to do.

Chrys. Well, then, in a word, in order not to waste your time, the marriage with Juliane was nothing but an idea which you may forget again. When I come to consider it rightly, Valer has indeed the best right to her.

Da. You deceive yourself if you think that I shall withdraw from it now. I have carefully considered everything, and I must tell you in quite plain words that a bad wife shall aid me to make my fame immortal, or rather that I will make a bad wife, who would not be thought of if she had not married a learned man, immortal together with myself. The character of such a wedded fiend will throw a certain light on mine——

Chrys. Well, well, take a bad wife, then; but take one with money, for with such a one the wickedness is still bearable. My first wife, of pious memory, was one of that sort. For the twenty thousand thalers, which I got with her, I would have married the foul fiend's sister. You must not misunderstand me, I don't mean it literally. But if your wife is to be a bad one, what do you want with Juliane? Listen; I know an old widow, who has quarrelled four husbands into the grave. She has plenty to live on; I should think she would suit you, take her! I made your mouth water, I must therefore put something into it. If you must have a Xantippe you can find no better one.

Da. Bother Xantippe! I have told you more than once that Xantippe was not a bad wife. Have you forgotten the grounds of my evidence again already?

Chrys. Eh? What? My evidence is the A B C book. He who could write a book, that has become so popular, must have understood the matter better than you. And, in short, it is of importance to me for Xantippe to be a bad wife. I could not be at peace with myself if I had praised my first wife so often. So be silent with your foolery; I don't care to be taught by you.

Da. Those are the thanks we get when we try to help people out of their errors.

Chrys. Since when, then, has the egg been wiser than the hen, eh? Herr Doctor, do not forget that I am the father, and that it depends on the father when the son shall marry. I will not have Juliane thought of any more.

Da. And why not?

Chrys. Shall I encumber my only son with a penniless girl? You are not worth the trouble I take about you. You know, of course, that she has no property?

Da. Had she more before, when I was to marry her, than now!

Chrys. You don't understand it. I knew what I was doing before; but I also know what I am doing now.

Da. If she has no money it is so much the better. People won't be able to accuse me then of having taken a bad wife for the sake of her money. They will have to admit that I had no other object than that of exercising myself in the virtues which are required for enduring such a wife.

Chrys. Such a wife! Who has told you that Juliane will be a bad wife?

Da. If I were not convinced of it *a priori*, as we scholars are wont to say, I might have concluded it from the fact that you are in doubt about it.

Chrys. That's nice impertinence, my son! nice impertinence! I have brought up Juliane; she has enjoyed much kindness at my hands. I have instructed her in all that is good. He who speaks evil of her speaks evil of me likewise. What? *I* not know how to bring up a girl? *I* have not brought up a girl who has grown up under my care that she will make a good, honest wife! It is true I have not been able to make her rich; I myself am still

in need of this blessing. But that I have not made her virtuous, and sensible, only one who is as stupid as you, my son, can say of me. Don't take it ill that I speak out. You are such a dried fool, such a stockfish . . . . . don't take it ill of me, my son . . . . . such an overworked smoked herring . . . . . but don't take it ill of me——

Da. (*aside*). I shall believe directly that his first business was in the salt-fish line. . . . . (*aloud*). Very well, father; I will say nothing of Juliane's virtue. Virtue is often a species of stupidity. But as for her good sense, you must allow me still to have doubts on that head. I have been back here again now for a considerable time, I have also taken the trouble sometimes to speak a word or two to her. But has she ever once turned her thoughts to my learning, do you think? I don't care to be praised; I am not so vain; but one must let people have their due——

Scene V.—Chrysander, Damis, Valer.

Chrys. Good, Herr Valer, good! You come just in the nick of time.

Da. What does this intolerable man want here again?

Va. I come to take leave of you both——

Chrys. Take leave? So early? Why then?

Va. I don't believe you ask that in earnest.

Chrys. God knows, Herr Valer, I am in most earnest earnest. I certainly won't let you go.

Va. In order to torture me more cruelly still? You know how dear to me the being whom you take from me to-day has always been. But the misfortune would be small if it fell on me alone. Are you going to unite this beloved being to one who hates her as much as I adore her? My whole soul is full of despair, and from this time forth I shall neither here, nor anywhere else in the world, become tranquil again. I go to——

Chrys. Don't go, Herr Valer, don't go! The evil may perhaps be remedied yet!

Va. Remedied? You insult me if you believe that I can ever recover this blow. It would be a mortal one to a less tender heart than mine.

Da. What twaddle! (*Seats himself at the table.*)

Va. How fortunate you are, Damis. Learn at any rate, to recognise your good-fortune; it is the least thanks that you owe to Heaven. Juliane will be yours——

Chrys. Eh? Who says so? She shall be yours soon enough, Herr Valer; only have patience!

Va. Cease your cold scoffing——

Chrys. Scoffing? You must know me but little. What I say, I say. I have considered the matter again; I see that Juliane does not suit my son, and he suits Juliane still less. You love her; you have been suing me for her a long time; first come, first served. I have just spoken about it to my son. . . . . You know him——

Va. Heavens, what do I hear! Is it possible? What a happy change! Allow me to embrace you a thousand times. Then I am to be happy after all? Oh, Chrysander! Oh, Damis!

Chrys. Talk to him, and bring him to reason. I will go to Juliane and inform her of my altered resolution. She won't take it ill of me, will she?

Va. Take it ill? You will give her life again, as you have given it me.

Chrys. Eh? Can I? (*Exit.*)

Scene VI.—Damis, Valer, Anton.

Va. And in what terms shall I address you, dearest friend? The renewal of your father's promise would justify me in passing you over altogether. I have won, as soon as ever Chrysander ceases to use pressure on Juliane. But how agreeable it will be to me if I can thank you in part for my possession of her.

Da. Anton!

An. (*comes forward*). What about him? Has the post come into your head again?

Da. Go at once! It must certainly have come in.

An. But I tell you, it can't come before ten o'clock in such bad weather.

Da. Do you add on another hour? Go, without further words! And if you come back with nothing, take care for yourself.

An. If I don't sleep sound to-night, I shall never

believe again as long as I live that weariness can help to make me do so. (*Exit.*)

Scene VII.—Damis, Valer.

Va. Well! instead of answering, you speak with your servant!

Da. Pardon me, Valer; you spoke to me, did you? My mind is full; it is impossible for me to hear everything.

Va. So you want to dissemble with me, too? I remember the time very well when I was under the same strange delusion, and thought it showed one's learning to be as abstracted as possible and attend to nothing but one's book. But, believe me, he must be very simple whom you expect to deceive with this humbug.

Da. And you must be still simpler if you believe any other head is as empty of ideas as your own. And does your twaddle deserve that I should listen to it? You have won, as soon as Chrysander ceases to use pressure on Juliane; you are justified you know in passing me over.

Va. That must be a curious sort of abstraction, I think, in which a man hears what another says so exactly that he can repeat it word for word.

Da. Your jesting is very sorry (*looks again at his book.*)

Va. But still to be felt!. . . . . What a torture it is to have to do with a man like you? There are few such——

Da. That I believe myself.

Va. But there would be more if——

Da. Quite so; if true learning were not so hard to attain, if the natural capacity for it were commoner, and untiring industry not such a toilsome thing——

Va. Ha, ha, ha!

Da. The laugh of a real idiot!

Va. You speak of your learning, and I, pardon me, was going to speak of your folly. In this I meant there would be more like you if this same folly did not become a burden to its slaves.

Da. Do you deserve that I should answer you? (*Looks at the book again.*)

Va. And do you deserve that I should still be friend enough to speak to you without dissimulation. Believe me, when you have more sense you will repent of your follies——

Da. When I have more sense? (*Scornfully.*)

Va. Are you indignant at that? This is strange! With your years your body cannot yet be full-grown, and you think, nevertheless, that your mind has already attained its highest possible perfection? I should consider him my enemy who would deny me the privilege of increasing my intelligence day by day.

Da. You?

Va. You become so scornful, my rival. . . . . but there she is herself! (*runs towards her*) Oh, Juliane——

Scene VIII.—Juliane, Damis, Valer.

Ju. Oh, Valer! What a happy change!

Da. (*turning in his chair.*) I have doubtless, Mademoiselle, to thank an error for the honour of seeing you here. You perhaps think that you are entering your own chamber.

Ju. That error would be unpardonable! No, sir, it happens by order of your father that I set foot on this sacred spot. I come to retract a bargain with you, and to beg your Muse's pardon for having almost run the risk of alienating so amiable a soul from her.

Va. How delighted I am, lovely Juliane, to see you in your playful mood again.

Da. If I rightly understand a girl's rubbish you come to annul a *pactum*, which has nevertheless all the *requisita* which are demanded for an irrevocable *pactum*.

Ju. And if I may understand the gibberish of a young scholar you have hit the mark.

Da. My father is an idiot. Is it in his or your power alone, Mademoiselle, to annul an agreement which remains firm on my side? . . . . . We shall see. Now might I beg of you to leave me in quiet. (*Turns to the table again.*)

Va. What behaviour! Did any man ever behave so to a girl to whose possession he lays claim?

Da. And has any one ever been so troublesome to a busy scholar? To get quit of this vexatious company I must myself leave my four walls. (*Exit.*)

Scene IX.—Valer, Juliane.

Ju. And we do not laugh at him?

Va. No, Juliane; may a better joy fill our hearts now; and besides there is a sort of cruelty in making ourselves merry over so pitiable a fool. How shall I describe to you the emotions of my heart, now, when all its happiness has been given back to it? I implore you, Juliane, if you love me, leave this dangerous house this very day with me. Do not any longer expose yourself to the vehemence of a changeable old man, the ravings of a young pedant, and the weakness of your own too gentle disposition. You have been taken from me and given back in one day; let it be the first and last which shall play with us so cruelly.

Ju. Be calm, Valer. Let us not do anything which might draw down reproaches on us from Chrysander. You see he is in the right way; and I love him as much as I despise Damis. I should ill repay his kindness by mistrustfully suddenly withdrawing myself from his care.

Va. You still speak of kindness always? I shall not feel at peace until I have freed you from these dangerous bonds. Permit me to annihilate them entirely, and as for the selfish old man——

Ju. Do not call him that, Valer; he is not so; and his change of mind already shows that Lisette was wrongly informed, or has deceived us. Indeed, I don't know to whom I ought to ascribe this change. . . . . (*Reflecting.*)

Va. Why so thoughtful all at once? The cause which moved him may be what it will. I know, at any rate, that it is a dispensation of Providence.

Ju. Of Providence, or else of Lisette! It now suddenly occurs to me what she said about a letter. Could Lisette's excessive zeal——

Va. What imagination, dearest Juliane! Why, she knows that your good principles will not consent to this petty deceit.

Ju. Nevertheless, the more I think of it——

Va. Even if it were so, would you on this account——

Ju. Even if it were so? How?

Scene X.—Lisette, Valer, Juliane.

Ju. You come as if called, Lisette.

Lis. Well? Don't my affairs go on excellently? Won't you come down with me and listen how Damis and Chrysander are quarrelling? "You shall not have her;" "I must have her;" "I am your father;" "You have promised her to me;" "I have changed my mind;" "I have not, so it must go on;" "That is impossible;" "Impossible or not. . . . . in short, I won't withdraw; I will prove to you from books that you must keep your word with me;" "You and your books may go to the deuce." Why do I repeat so much of their silly talk? The father is right; he manages cleverly; but he certainly wouldn't manage so cleverly if I had not been so clever first.

Ju. How do you mean that, Lisette?

Lis. I don't like praising myself. Briefly, my dear mistress, I am your guardian angel!

Ju. You? And how, then?

Lis. By paying a deceiver in his own coin. The horrid old——

Ju. And so you have deceived Chrysander?

Lis. Don't say that. One does not deceive a deceiver, one only gets the better of him. I have got the better of him.

Va. How?

Lis. It is bad enough that you have forgotten it again already. I should imagine that to be grateful people would require a better memory.

Ju. You have, then, actually palmed off the false letter on him, I suppose?

Lis. Heaven forbid! I have merely sought to change his mind by a forged letter, and I have succeeded in it.

Ju. You have done that? And I owe my happiness

to a deceiver? Let the result be what it will, Chrysander shall hear of it at once.

Lis. What does that mean? Are these the thanks I get?

Va. Consider, Juliane! Stay.

Ju. Impossible, Valer; let me go. (*Exit* Juliane.)

Scene XI.—Valer, Lisette.

Va. Heavens! Now all is over again.

Lis. Well, she may have her way! I could spit poison and gall, I feel so wild! To call me a deceiver in return for my good-will! I hoped she would fall on my neck for joy. . . . . How the old man will storm at me! He will drive me and you out of the house. What do you propose to do now?

Va. Ah! What am I to do now, Lisette?

Lis. I think you answer me with my own question! That is easy. I have come to the end of my good advice. I'm likely to meddle in such a business again soon!

Va. But at what an unlucky moment, too, you came, Lisette. I had told you that Juliane would not consent to this trick. Couldn't you have held your tongue a while longer?

Lis. Could I imagine that she would be so extraordinarily obstinate? You can easily fancy how it is with people of my sort: if you had given me ever so much, I could not have concealed from her any longer that she owed her happiness to me: Joy is talkative, and . . . . . Oh, I should like——

Scene XII.—Anton, Valer, Lisette.

An. (*with letters in his hand*). Ha, ha! You are holding a meeting again! If my master knew what wicked plots were being laid against him in his own room, he would, Lisette. . . . . But how queerly you are standing there together! Herr Valer looks troubled; you are fiery, as fiery as a turkey-cock. Have you been fighting, or otherwise taking exercise? Eh, eh? Lisette, listen. . . . . (*in a low voice to* Lisette). You surely

haven't fallen out with him about the dowry? He hasn't withdrawn his promise, has he? That would be a cursed trick. (*Aloud*). No, no, Herr Valer, what a man promises that he must keep to. She has served you well, and so have I. The deuce! Do you suppose, then, people of honourable mind will feel no qualms of conscience, when they have deceived their masters for nothing at all? I am not going to let myself be humbugged, and my claim at any rate. . . . . Devil take me! I'll employ a lawyer, a regular bulldog of a lawyer, who you may be sure shall give you so much to do——

Lis. Oh! be quiet, fool.

Va. What do you mean? Whom are you speaking to?

An. My stars! I am speaking to our debtor. You might understand that by my tone I should think.

Va. And who then is your debtor?

An. Does it come now to this, that you want to deny the debt? Listen; my lawyer will put you on your oath——

Va. Lisette, do you know what he means?

Lis. The madman! I wanted him just now to deliver the letter, and promised him a reward from you, if the matter turned out well.

Va. Nothing more?

An. I should have thought that was enough, though. And how does it stand with Lisette's dowry? I must take as much care about her property as about mine, since it is going to be mine, you know.

Va. Don't be uneasy. If I attain my happiness I certainly won't forget yours.

An. But suppose you don't? A promise is still a promise.

Va. Even in that case I will not leave your zeal unrewarded.

An. Oh, that is fine talk, fine talk.

Lis. Just be quiet, do.

An. What a fool you are; I am speaking for you, too.

Lis. But it is quite unnecessary.

An. Unnecessary? Haven't you been quarrelling?

Lis. Well, why not?

An. Hasn't he withdrawn his promise?

Lis. No.

An. Oh then, pardon me, Herr Valer. Anger can easily seize an honest man. I am a little hasty, especially in money matters. Don't be afraid of the lawyer.

Va. Can I linger here any longer in such torturing uncertainty? I must speak to her; perhaps she hasn't done it yet.

Lis. But if she has done it, don't you go too near the old man.

Va. I have known nothing of the whole affair.

Lis. So much the worse, then, for me. Go along.

Scene XIII.—Anton, Lisette.

An. So much the worse for you? What, then, is so much the worse for you? Why mustn't he go near the old man? What are you up to, again.

Lis. That confounded letter.

An. What letter.

Lis. The one I gave you just now.

An. What about it?

Lis. It is all in vain; my trouble is for nothing.

An. How so? As I live I have delivered it properly. Don't talk any nonsense and shift the blame on to me.

Lis. It was delivered right enough; and it has already had its effect, too. But Juliane has herself upset the calculation. She insists on letting the old man know that the letter was forged, and has probably done it already.

An. What the deuce! She herself? We shall fare nicely. You see, the sparrow and the dove are gone now. And the worst of all is that, while I was going to catch the dove, I have tumbled into the mud. Or, to speak to you plainly, and without metaphor, I have lost the promised reward from the old man, and the imagined one from Valer escapes me too, and all the profit I shall make out of this business is a "To the devil with you," accompanied by a gracious poke in the ribs. . . . . Will you still take me after that, Miss Lisette? Oh, you must. I'll teach you to make people unfortunate——

Lis. I shall be better off, of course? We take our road

together, and when we are once united, you will have to see how you will maintain me.

An. Maintain you? In these hard times? If I could only go round with you, like the man with the big beast that has a horn on its nose.

Lis. Don't distress yourself, I'll soon turn you into a beast with a horn. It will amount to the same thing, I suppose, whether you go round with me, or I with you.

An. Well, certainly, with you one knows, at any rate, where one is. . . . . But, not to mix things up, where is my master? Here at last are his confounded letters.

Lis. Do you see him?

An. No; but if I don't mistake, I hear him now.

Lis. Just let him come; I will make him mad yet, to finish up with.

Scene XIV.—Anton, Lisette, Damis (*advances in deep thought;* Lisette *slips behind him and imitates his gestures*).

An. Stay! I will keep him on the hook a little longer, and not give him the letters at once. (*Hides them.*) Why so lost in thought, Herr Damis? What have you on your mind again?

Da. Hold your tongue.

An. That's a short answer! But shall not a servant be anxious about his master? It would be quite reasonable too for me also to know what you were thinking of. Even a blind hen sometimes finds a grain, and perhaps I might——

Da. Silence!

An. That's a still shorter answer. If it gradually decreases in this way, I shall see presently what is left. What are you reckoning on your fingers? What has your poor nail done to you that you bite it so? (*Sees* Lisette.) And, the deuce! what sort of ape is that? Are you mad?

Lis. Hold your tongue.

An. For Heaven's sake go! If my master wakes out of his sleep and sees you——

Lis. Silence!

An. Are you making fun of me or of my master? Just look behind you, Herr Damis.

Da. (*walks up and down a few times in deep thought,*

Lisette *in the same fashion behind him; and when he turns she slips round quickly, so that he does not see her*).

"The flame of my marriage-torch
Shall now by myself be sung."

An. Ho, ho! you are making verses? Come, Lisette, we must leave him alone now. On occasions like this he has already kicked me out of the room, more than once. Come; he is sure to call us back again, himself, as soon as he is done, and perhaps the whole house as well.

Lis. (*While* Damis *turns, she remains motionless in front of him, and assumes his tone.*)

"The flame of my marriage-torch
Shall now by myself be sung."

(Damis *pretends not to see her, and runs against her.*)

Da. What's that?

Lis. What's that? (*Both as if they were coming to themselves*).

Da. Ignorant, low-minded fellow! Haven't I told you often enough to let no one into my room, or at the most only my father. What does she want here?

Lis. Ignorant, low-minded fellow! Haven't you told me often enough that I must leave the room? But can't you imagine that she who has been allowed to be in the cabinet, will also have permission to be in the room? Ignorant, low-minded fellow!

An. Which am I to answer now?

Da. Turn her out of the room at once.

An. Turn her out? By force?

Da. If she won't go quietly——

An. Lisette, go quietly——

Lis. As soon as it suits me.

Da. Turn her out, I say.

An. Come, Lisette, give me your hand; I will lead you out with all ceremony.

Lis. You bear! Who would presume to lead a girl with uncovered hands?

An. Oh, I know how to behave, too! In the absence of a glove . . . . . (*takes the lappet of his waistcoat*). May I have the honour——

Da. I see clearly I shall myself have to——(*rushes at her*).

Lis. Ha, ha, ha! I only wanted to make you do it! Good-bye. (*Exit.*)

Scene XV.—Anton, Damis.

Da. Now all my thoughts are scattered again! The fire is gone out. The imaginative power is dispersed. The god who must inspire us has deserted me. . . . . The cursed creature! What vexation she has caused me to-day. How scoffingly she has behaved to me. Heavens! To mimic me so ridiculously in my reverie.

An. But you didn't see it, you know.

Da. I didn't see it?

An. Did you? Is it possible? And you only pretended that?

Da. Silence, idiot! I'll see if I can bring myself again into the ecstasy.

An. You had better not do so; the verses over which one looks so black, cannot possibly turn out well. But mayn't one know what it is going to be? An evening song, or a morning song?

Da. Blockhead!

An. A penitential song.

Da. Ninny!

An. A feasting song! Not that, either! . . . . You surely are not going to make a dirge? As I am an honest man, if I were ever so great a poet, I would leave them unmade. Dying is the most absurd trick that a man can play himself. It doesn't deserve a verse, let alone a song.

Da. I must have pity on your ignorance. You know no other sort of poems than those you have met with in your hymn-book.

An. There are others, then, I suppose? Let me hear what you compose.

Da. I am composing . . . . . an *Epithalamium*.

An. An *Epithalamium*. My stars! That's a difficult thing! And can you really manage that? Art is wanted for that. . . . . But, Herr Damis, in confidence, what is an *Epith—pitha—thlamium?*

DA. How can you say that it is difficult, if you don't know yet what it is?

AN. Eh? Why, the word is quite hard enough. Just tell me what it is under some other name.

DA. An *Epithalamium* is a *Thalassio.*

AN. Oh, ah! Now I understand. An *Epithalamium* is a . . . . . what do you call it?

DA. *Thalassio.*

AN. A *Thalassio;* and you can make that? You will want a good deal of time for that, at any rate. But, I say, if any one asks me now what a *Thalassio* is, what am I to answer?

DA. Then you don't know what a *Thalassio* is, either?

AN. I for my part know well enough. A *Thalassio* is an . . . . . what do you call the other word?

DA. *Epithalamium.*

AN. Is an *Epithalamium.* And an *Epithalamium* is a *Thalassio?* Haven't I remembered it correctly, eh? But then that might not be clear to other people, who don't understand either word.

DA. Well, then, tell them a *Thalassio* is a *Hymenæus.*

AN. The deuce! That is giving people trouble. An *Epithalamium* is a *Thalassio,* and a *Thalassio* is a *Hymenæus.* And so, the other way, a Hym—hym. . . . . The deuce may remember the names.

DA. Right, right. I see, though, that you are beginning to attain a conception of things.

AN. I a conception of this? As I am an honest man, you are mistaken. A goblin must have whispered it to me if I know what those outlandish words mean. Tell me their English names; or havn't they any?

DA. They have one, truly, but it is far removed from the grace and expressiveness of the Greek or Latin. Just say yourself whether a "Marriage poem" does not sound much poorer than an *Epithalamium,* a *Hymenæus,* a *Thalassio.*

AN. Not to me; certainly not to me. For I understand one and not the other. So you have been desiring to compose a marriage poem. Why didn't you say that at once? . . . . Oh! I have an acquaintance with marriage poems which is astonishing. I must just tell you how I

came by it. My lately deceased father had a cousin. . . . . and so, in some degree, he was my cousin too——

Da. What rubbish is coming?

An. You won't wait for it? Well. It is your loss. So to proceed; you were going to compose verses on a marriage? But on what marriage?

Da. What a question! On my own.

An. So you are still going to marry Juliane. The old man won't have it, you know!

Da. Oh! He!

An. Quite true. Why should a son trouble himself about his father? But tell me, is it becoming for one to compose verses on one's own marriage?

Da. It certainly is not usual; but so much the better. Minds like mine love the peculiar.

An. (*aside*). Hist! I'll play him a trick now. . . . (*Aloud.*) I say, Herr Damis, I would myself gladly see you marry Juliane.

Da. Why so?

An. I don't know whether I dare make so bold as to tell you. I have. . . . . I have myself——

Da. Out with it.

An. I have myself tried to make verses on your marriage, and therefore I should not like that my trouble should be lost.

Da. They must be something splendid!

An. Certainly! For that is my failing; I either do something excellent or else nothing at all.

Da. Give it me. Perhaps I may improve your rhymes, so that they may do honour to both of us.

An. Listen; I will read them over to you. (*Feels for a scrap of paper in his pocket.*) I must tell you, I have not quite finished it yet. But the beginning, out of which one can always make the end, runs thus. . . . . Push the light a little nearer to me. . . . .

Thou, oh noble skill,
For our proposèd end,
Effective means. . . . .

Da. Stop! You are a miserable bungler. Ha, ha! That "Thou oh" is quite useless. "Noble skill" says

no less, and "Thou, oh noble skill" no more. *Deleatur ergo*, "Thou, oh." But that there should not be two syllables wanting, strengthen the epithet noble, after the manner of the Greeks, and say "super-noble." I am quite aware that "super-noble" is a new word; but I know too that it is new words which most chiefly distinguish poetry from prose. Remember these little dodges. You must by all means strive to say something unheard of, something that has not yet been said. Do you understand me, you stupid devil?

An. I will hope so.

Da. Then your first verse is, *Super-noble skill*, and so on. Now read further.

An. *For our proposèd end*
Effective means to send,
And, when the hour doth will,
With thy own strength to strive,
Shalt, till this planet's ball
To its first Cha—Cha—Chaos fall,
Like to a poplar thrive.

But, Herr Damis, can't you tell me what it was I thought of here? Confound it! That is fine; I don't understand it myself any more, "To its first Cha—Chaos. . . . . I should never have thought I had the word in my mouth, it sounds so dreadful to me.

Da. Show it——

An. Wait, wait! I will read it over to you once more.

Da. No, no; hand me the paper.

An. You can't possibly read it. I have written much too badly; not a letter stands upright. They are all jumping on one another's backs.

Da. Give it me!

An. (*gives him the paper trembling*). The deuce! It is his own writing.

Da. (*looks at it for a time*). What does this mean? (*Jumps up angrily.*) Cursed traitor, whence did you get this leaf?

An. Not so angry; not so angry!

Da. Whence did you get it?

An. Are you going to throttle me?

Da. Whence did you get that leaf, I ask?

An. Let me go first.

Da. Confess.

An. From. . . . . from your. . . . . waistcoat-pocket.

Da. Untaught brute! Is that your honesty? That is a theft, a *plagium*.

An. The deuce! To make a thief of me for such a trifle!

Da. Trifle? What! Call the commencement of a didactic philosophical poem a trifle?

An. You said yourself it was good for nothing.

Da. Yes, in so far as it was intended for a marriage-cantata, and in so far as you were composer of it. At once produce the other manuscripts which you have stolen from me of late. Am I to see my work in the hands of strangers? Am I to permit a hideous jackdaw to adorn himself with my beauteous peacock plumes? Out with them quickly, or I shall adopt other measures.

An. What do you want? I haven't got a single letter more of yours.

Da. Turn all your pockets inside out at once.

An. I dare say! If I turn them inside out, everything I have got in them will fall out.

Da. Do it, and don't enrage me.

An. I am a scoundrel if you find so much as a scrap of paper on me. But still that you may have your will, here is one; here is another. . . . . what do you see? There is the third; that too is empty. Now for the fourth. . . . . (*When he turns it out, the letters fall out.*) . . . . The deuce! those damned letters! I had quite forgotten them . . . . . (*Stoops to pick them up again quickly.*)

Da. Give it me, give it me! What fell there? It is something else of mine I expect.

An. As true as I live it is nothing of yours. It might rather be something addressed to you.

Da. Don't delay me; I have other things to do.

An. Don't delay me. You surely know that I must be going to the post again directly. I know there are letters there.

Da. Go then, go! But show me first what you picked up so quickly. I insist. I must see it.

AN. The deuce! If that's so, I need not go to the post.

DA. How so?

AN. Well, well! There they are. I shall be off at once. (*Gives him the letter and is running off.*)

DA. (*looking at it*). Ha! Anton, Anton! This is just the very letter from Berlin I am expecting. I know it by the address.

AN. It may well be that it is it. But, Herr Damis, don't be. . . . . be angry. I had quite forgotten it, on my soul.

DA. What had you forgotten?

AN. That I have been carrying the letter in my pocket for almost half-an-hour already. That confounded chattering!

DA. Since it is here now, I will forgive you that stupid blunder. . . . . But, my dearest Anton, what unparalleled, what priceless news must this contain! How pleased my father will be! What honour, what praise! Oh, Anton! I will read it at once to you. . . . . (*Breaks it open quickly.*)

AN. Gently, you are tearing it up. There now. Didn't I say so?

DA. No harm is done. We can still read it. First of all I must tell you what it is about. You know, or rather you do not know, that the Prussian Academy offered a prize for the best dissertation on the theory of Monads. It occurred to me quite late to take this prize out of the mouths of our philosophers. So I set about it at once, and wrote a treatise, which must have arrived just in the nick of time. . . . . A treatise, Anton. . . . . I don't know myself where I got it from, it is so learned. It is now a week since the Academy made known their judgment on the writings sent in, which must necessarily have gone in my favour. I, I and no other, must have the prize. I have solemnly engaged one of my friends on the spot to give me news of it at once. Here it is; now listen:

"My dear Damis,

"How well you know how to get an answer from your friend. You threaten me with the loss of your affec-

tion if you do not hear from me the first intelligence as to whether you, or another, has carried off the Academy's prize. I must therefore with all speed report to you that you have not (*stammering*). . . . . obtained it, and also (*more and more timidly*). . . . . could not . . . . . have obtained it."

What? I have not obtained it? And who has, then? And why not?

"But allow me to speak to you as your friend."

Speak, traitor.

"It was impossible for me to do you the ill service of giving in your treatise.". . . . .

So you have not sent it in, false man! Heavens! What a blow! . . . . . And so your negligence, unworthy friend, is to deprive me of the reward I merit?. . . . . How will he excuse himself, the worthless fellow?

"If I am to confess the truth, you appear to have done something quite different from what the Academy required. They did not wish you to discuss what the word *monad* signifies grammatically; who used it first; what it means in Xenocrates; whether the Monads of Pythagoras were the Atoms of Moschus, &c. How do these critical trivialities concern them, especially when the main subject was lost sight of among them? How easily might somebody have guessed your name, and then you might have been exposed to jests such as I found on you only a few days ago in a learned journal. . . . ."

What do I read? Can I believe my eyes? Oh, cursed paper. Cursed hand that wrote thee! (*Throws the letter on the ground and tramples on it.*)

An. The poor letter! But one must read to the end. (*Takes it up.*) Perhaps the best is still to come, Herr Damis. Where were you? Here it is; listen now. "In a learned journal. . . . . They call you a youthful scholaraster who would like to shine everywhere, and whose passion for scribbling——"

Da. (*snatches the letter out of his hand*). The damned correspondent! This is the reward the letter deserves! (*tears it.*) You tear my heart, and I tear your shameless news. Would to God I could do the same with your

entrails! But. . . . . (*to* Anton.) You worthless ignorant brute! It is all your fault!

An. Mine, Herr Damis?

Da. Yes, yours. How long did you keep that letter in your pocket?

An. Sir, my pocket can neither read nor write; if you should think that it can have altered it——

Da. Silence! . . . . Can I survive such abuse?. . . . . Oh, ye stupid Germans. Yes, truly, it needs another genius to value properly such works as mine. You will ever remain in the darkness of your barbarism, and be a laughing-stock to your intelligent neighbours. But I will be revenged on you, and from this time forth will cease to be called a German. I will leave my thankless fatherland. Father, relations and friends are all, all unworthy that I should recognise them any longer, since they are Germans; since they are of the people who casts its greatest spirits with violence from itself! I am sure that France and England will recognise my desert——

An. Herr Damis, Herr Damis, you are beginning to rave. I am not safe with you; I shall have to call some one.

Da. They will feel in good time, those stupid Germans, what they have lost in me! To-morrow I will make arrangements to leave this unhappy country——

Scene XVI.—Chrysander, Damis, Anton.

An. God be thanked that some one has come.

Chrys. That confounded girl Lisette! And (*to* Anton) you, you rascal! You too shall have your postman's pay. To deceive me so! Very good! . . . . My son, I have reflected; you are right; I cannot now take Juliane from you again. You shall have her.

Da. Juliane again already? Now, when I have quite other matters to decide. Do stop talking of it. I don't want to have her.

Chrys. It would be wrong of me to desire to oppose you any longer. I leave every one his freedom. And I see clearly that Juliane pleases you.

Da. Me? A stupid German woman?

Chrys. She is a pretty, virtuous, upright girl; she will bring you a thousand joys.

Da. You may praise her or abuse her; it is all the same to me. I know how to act in accordance with your will, and that is, not to think of her.

Chrys. No, no. You shall not be able to complain of my severity.

Da. And you still less of my disobedience.

Chrys. I will show you that you have a good father, who regulates his acts more in accordance with your will than his own.

Da. And I will show you that you have a son who renders you in all things due submissiveness.

Chrys. Yes, yes. Take Juliane. I give you my blessing.

Da. No, no. I will not thus provoke you.

Chrys. What does this opposition mean? You provoke me by that.

Da. I cannot believe that you have already changed your mind for the third time in earnest?

Chrys. And why not?

Da. Oh, let it be as it may. I too have changed, and am firmly resolved not to marry at all. I must travel, and the sooner I set about it the better.

Chrys. What? You will rush off into the world without my leave?

An. This is a joke. The third man is still wanting, and I will fetch him at once. Damis won't have Juliane; perhaps Valer will catch her. (*Exit.*)

Scene XVII.—Chrysander, Damis.

Da. Yes, yes, In twice four-and-twenty hours I must already be on my way.

Chrys. Whatever has come into your head?

Da. I have for some time been tired of staying in Germany, in this northern abode of rudeness and stupidity, where all the elements hinder one from being wise; where a mind like mine is born hardly once in a hundred years.

Chrys. Have you forgotten that Germany is your fatherland?

Da. What is fatherland to me?

Chrys. You reprobate; better say at once, what is your father to you. But I will show you: you must take Juliane; you have given her your word, and she has given hers to you.

Da. She has withdrawn hers, as I do mine now; therefore——

Chrys. Therefore, therefore! To speak briefly of the matter: do you realise that I am able to disinherit you if you don't obey me?

Da. Do what you please. Only, if I may beg a favour, leave me alone now. Before I start, I must finish two papers which, out of pity, I will leave behind to my countrymen. I beg of you again to leave me.

Chrys. Wouldn't you prefer to turn me out?

Scene XVIII.—Valer, Anton, Chrysander, Damis.

Va. How? Damis? Is it true that you have come to yourself once more? . . . . . That you renounce Juliane?

Chrys. Oh, Herr Valer, you could not come at a more unlucky time for me. You strengthen him nicely in his obstinacy. You deserved, didn't you, that I should accommodate myself to your wishes? To try to deceive me in such an impious way! My son, don't oppose me any longer, or——

Da. Your threats are useless. I must show myself to foreign lands, which have as much right to me as my fatherland. And you don't want me to drag a wife about with me, do you?

Va. Damis is right to insist on travelling. Nothing can be more beneficial to him in his circumstances. Let him have his way, and let me have Juliane, whom you have so solemnly promised to me.

Chrys. Promised? One need not keep one's word with liars.

Va. I have already assured you on my oath, that Lisette alone attempted this deceit; without her we should have known nothing whatever of the document . . . .

How fortunate it would have been had it never come to light! It is the most cruel fortune that Juliane could have met with. How gladly would she sacrifice it, if she could thus obtain freedom for her heart!

Chrys. Sacrifice? Consider, Herr Valer, what that means. We merchants like to take a man at his word.

Va. Oh, pray, do so here. Juliane resigns the document to you with joy. Begin the suit if you like; the gain from it shall be entirely yours. Juliane considers this the smallest token of her gratitude. She thinks herself indebted to you for much more.

Chrys. Come, come, she has always seemed full of gratitude towards me. . . . . But what Valer, will you, as her future husband, say to this gratitude?

Va. Think better of me. I loved Juliane when she had no hopes of anything. I love her still, without the slightest selfish object in view. And, besides what sort of present, does one make an honest man, when one presents him with a long lawsuit?

Chrys. Valer, are you in earnest?

Va. Claim even more than the document; half my fortune is yours.

Chrys. God forbid that I should wish to have a farthing of your fortune. You mustn't think me so selfish. We are good friends, and the old agreement still holds. Juliane is yours. And if the document is to be mine, she is all the more yours.

Va. Come, Herr Chrysander, confirm this to her yourself. How pleased she will be to be able to make us both happy.

Chrys. If that is the case, Damis, as far as I am concerned, you can start this very night. I shall thank God when I have got such a fool out of the house again.

Da. Go, if you please, and leave me alone.

Va. And have I, after all, to thank you, Damis, for my happiness? I do so with the sincerest affection, although I know that I am not the cause of your change of mind.

Da. But the true cause? . . . . . (*to* Anton). Cursed fellow, couldn't you hold your tongue. . . . . Please go, Valer. (*While* Chrysander *and* Valer *are preparing to go,* Anton *stops* Valer.)

An. (*in a low voice*). Not so fast! How stands it with Lisette's dowry, Herr Valer? and with——

Va. Don't be uneasy; I will keep my word better than I promised.

An. Hurrah! Now the dove is caught.

Scene XIX.—Damis (*at the table*), Anton.

An. One word more, Herr Damis, I have to say to you.

Da. Well?

An. You are going to travel——

Da. Come to the point! This is already more than one word.

An. Well, then; my discharge.

Da. Your discharge? You suppose, perhaps, that I should take an ignorant ass like you with me?

An. You won't? And I have my discharge then? God be thanked! Now receive yours, also, which shall consist in a little advice. I have witnessed your follies for more than three years now, and I have done foolishly enough myself during the time, since I know that a servant, be his master ever so foolish——

Da. Shameless idiot! Will you get out of my sight!

An. Well, well! He who won't be advised can't be helped either. Remain Herr Damis the Scholar for the rest of your life. (*Exit.*)

Da. Go, I say, or. . . . . (*Throws the book after him, and the curtain falls.*)

THE END.